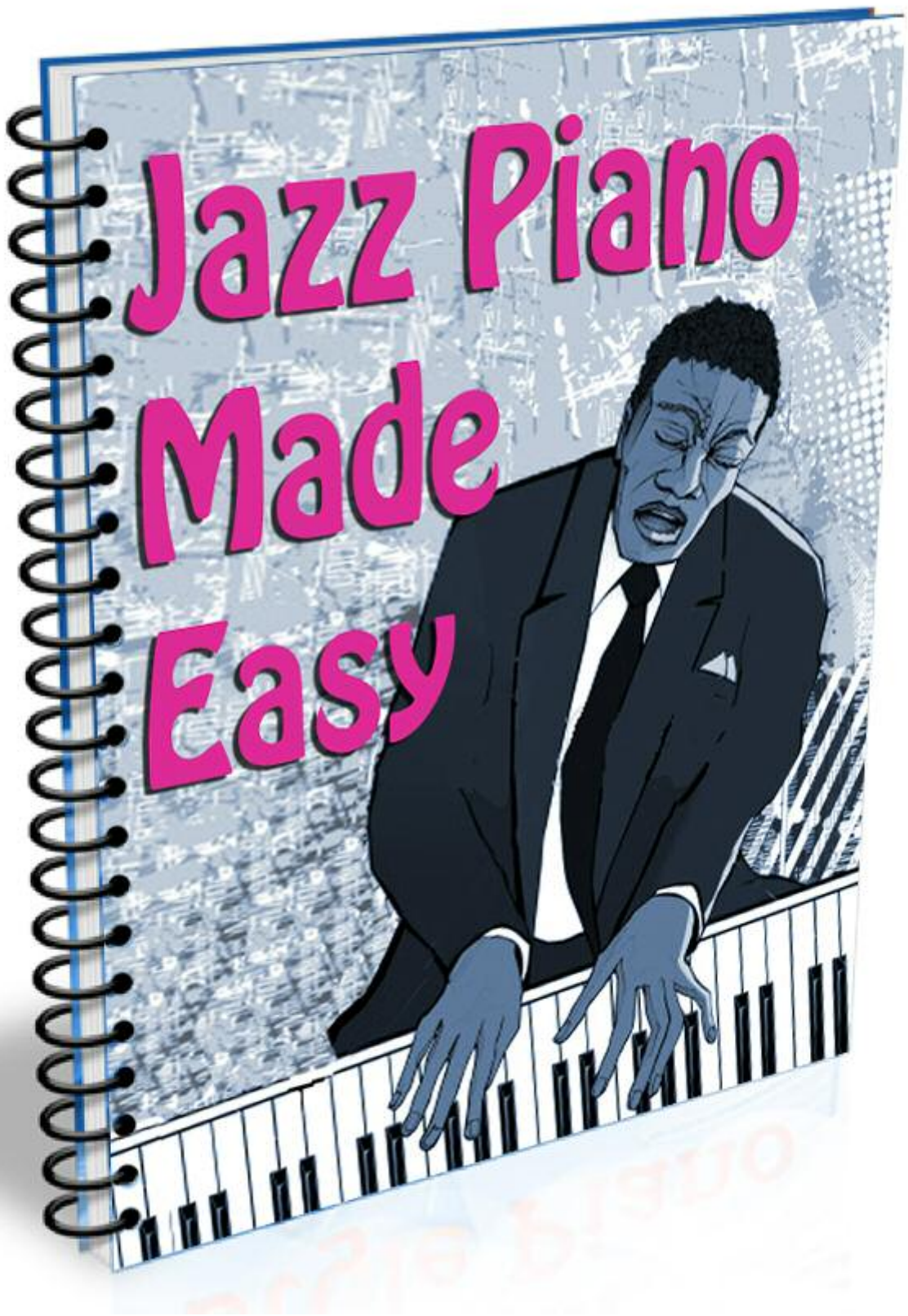

Jazz Piano
Made
Easy

LET'S START WITH SOME JAZZY BLUES

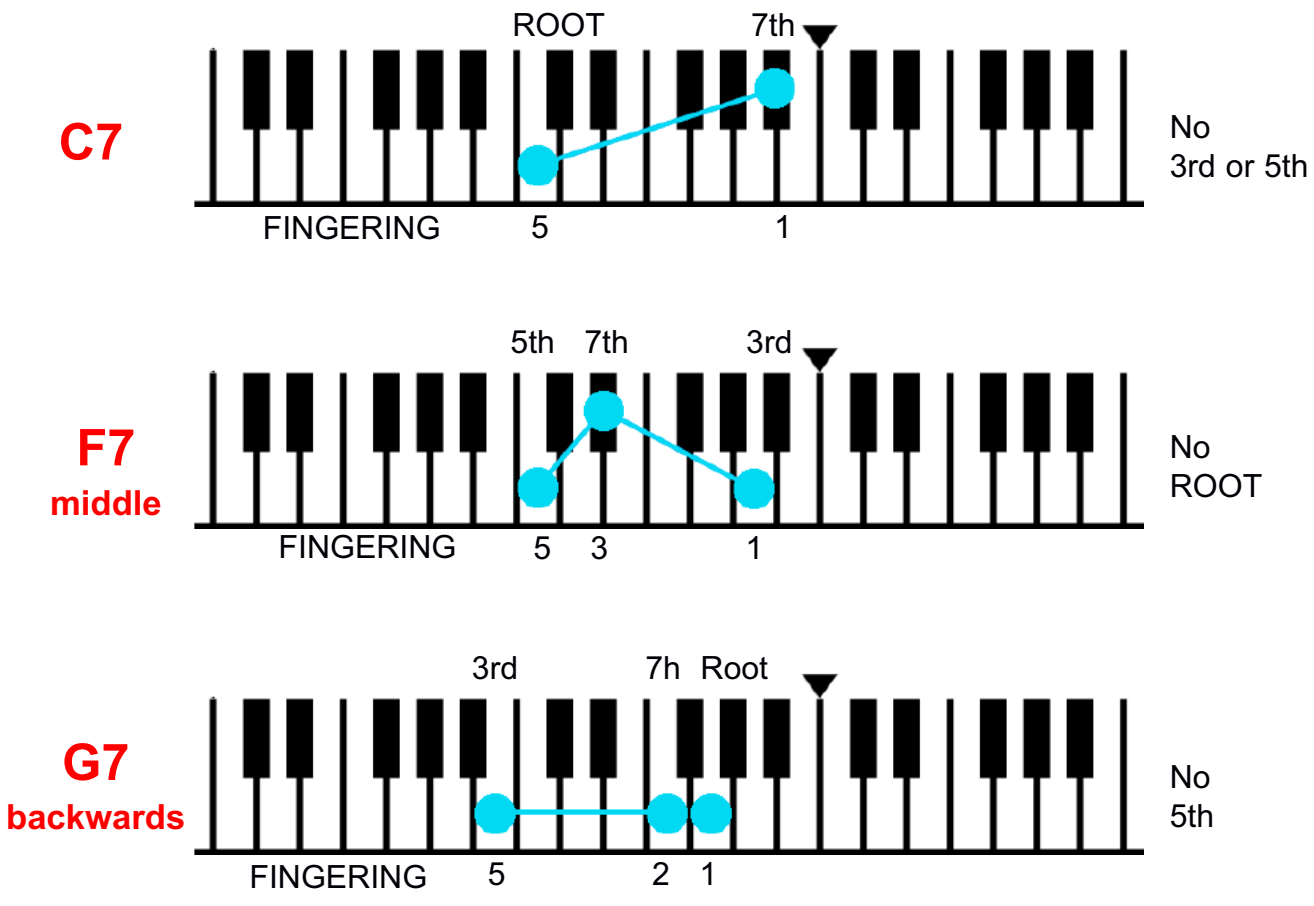
Ceasy BLUES
part 1

Thank goodness for the BLUES!
It's usually only 12 bars long, you only need 3 chords and if you learn just ONE blues scale you can improvise all day long.

Let's start with the key of C and the three chords

LEFT hand blues chords are usually 7ths (NOT maj7ths) and rarely use as many chord notes as the fuller Jazz chords. Notice the chord notes that have been left out.

LEFT HAND



Ceasy BLUES
part 2

The magic BLUES SCALE

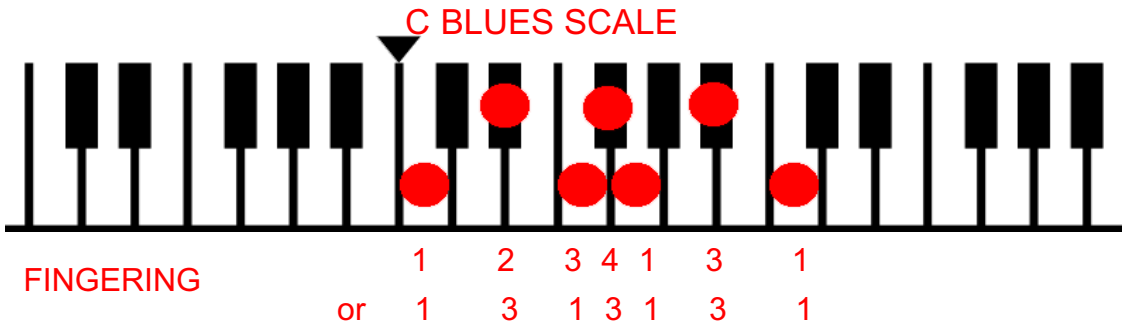
The reason the BLUES SCALE is so useful is that it magically sounds great over ANY chord change in a given key (if you want to sound 'Bluesy' that is)

So, if a song's 'overall key' is C then a C blues scale will sound great with all the chord changes.

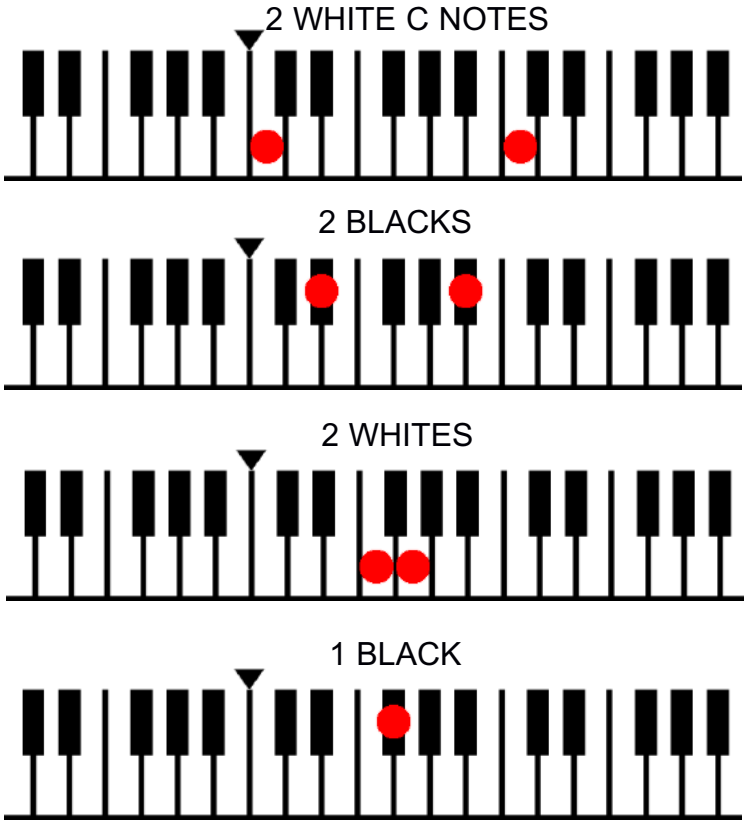
Let's look at a C BLUES SCALE that will go with your **Ceasy Blues** chords.

I will explain the why's and wherefore's later on. For now just MEMORISE!

LOOK AT THE VERY **GEOMETRICAL** SHAPE IT MAKES



Another way to look at the scale



Ceasy BLUES

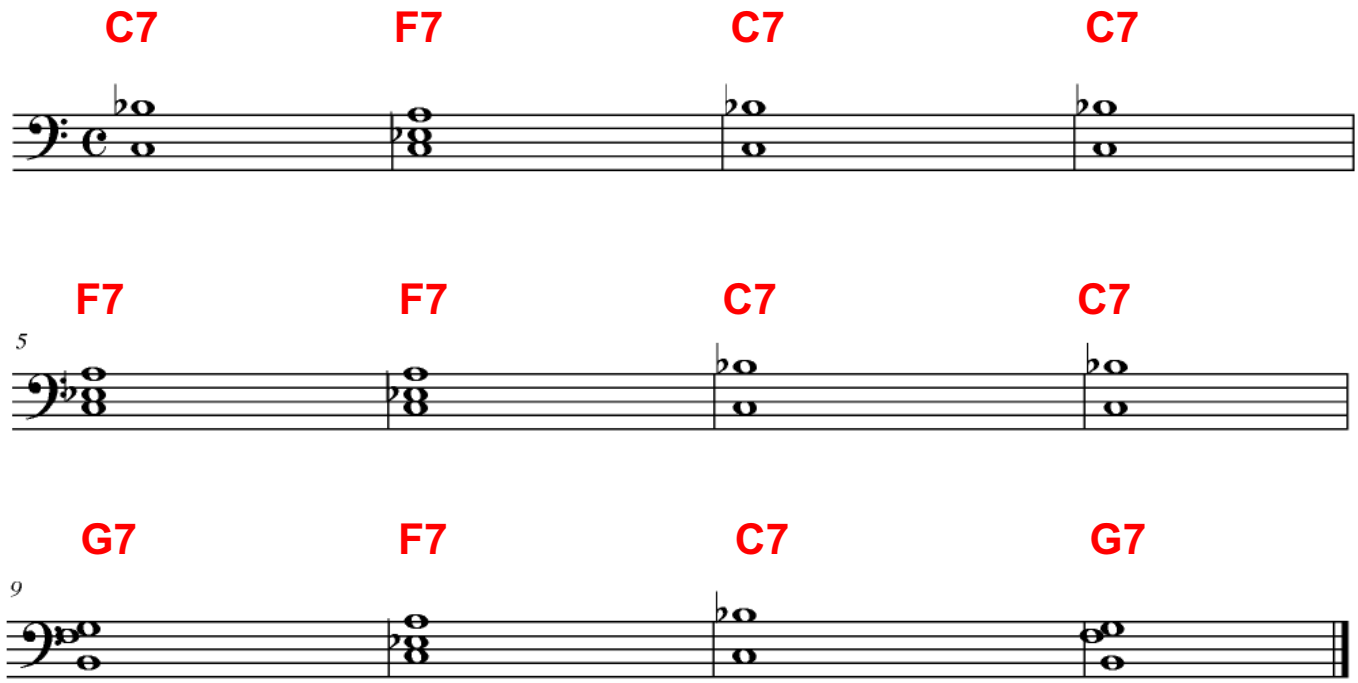
part 3

USING THE C BLUES SCALE

Now you have the notes that are **GUARANTEED** to sound good over your 3 chord changes you need to learn how to put them together in ways that sound interesting.

Read page 19 on how to play melodies and improvise. Don't just play random notes. Break the scale up into little 2, 3 or 4 note patterns. Repeat certain patterns. Make up melodies. SING a blues song in your head "WOKE UP DIS MORNIN" then try and play it with the scale. Try variety. Leave silences. Try an octave further up the piano. Try to play the scale over two or three octaves. MAKE MISTAKES - take risks

Before I show you some typical patterns and riffs, try improvising with the C BLUES scale over the following chord progression (these are the 3 blues chords you just learned). Hold each left hand chord for four beats per bar. Keep it simple.

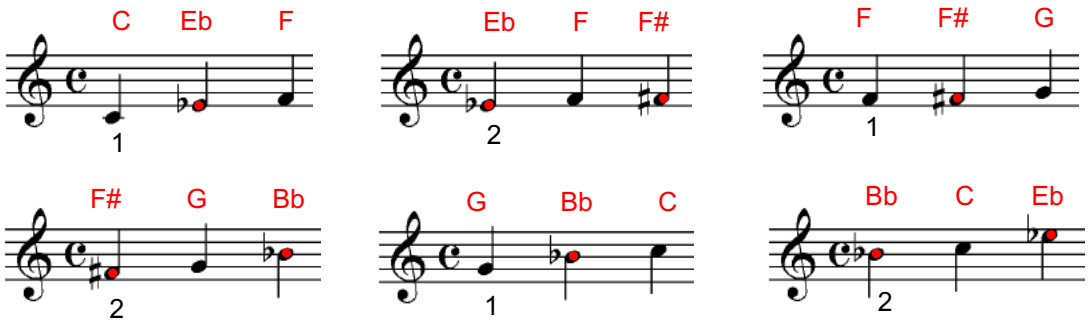
DO IT YOURSELF BLUES

Ceasy BLUES RIFFS

Practice these riffs and patterns and introduce them
gradually into your improvisations

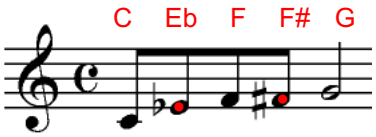
If you see this symbol (♮) it means the note is 'natural' again (ie NOT flat or sharp)

These three note patterns are taken from the BLUES SCALE - experiment with them

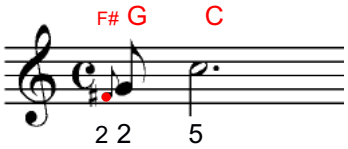
1



This is a five finger position for the scale

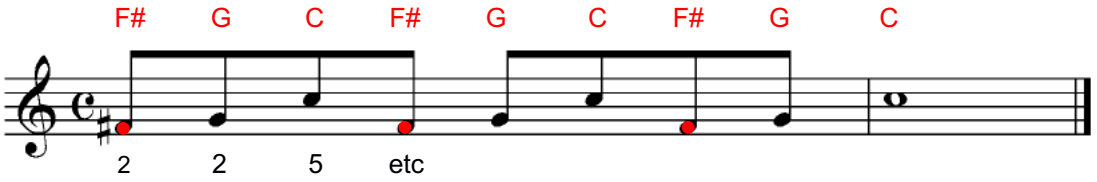
2

This is a 'SLIDE' - very often you slide onto the white key from the flat of the key

3

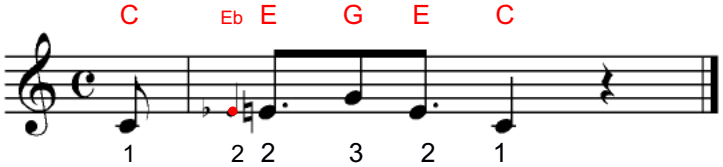
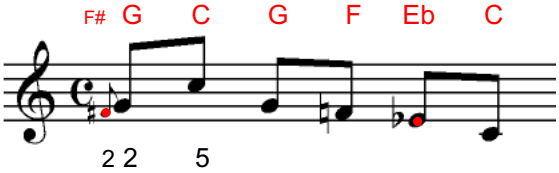


This sounds similar but stretches the sound out. Notice that the sharp # in front of the first F makes all the F notes in that bar sharp.

4

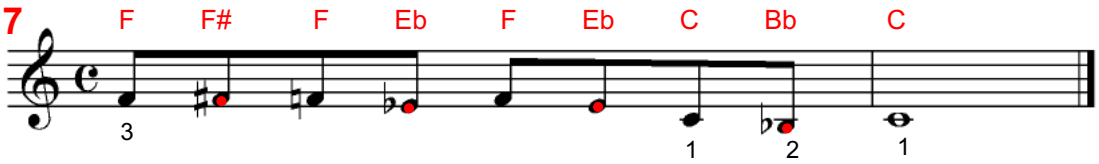


I call this the 'Bonnie & Clyde' Riff. It always reminds me of the song.

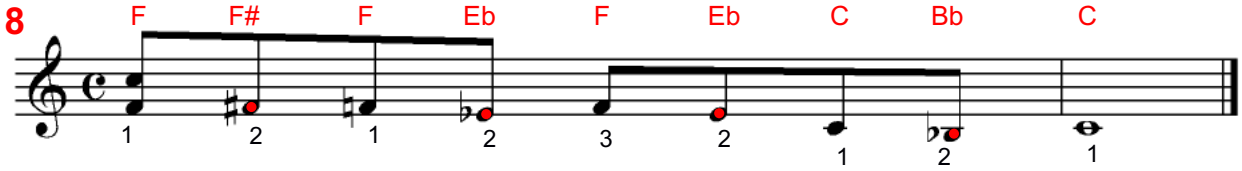
5

6

Ceasy BLUES RIFFS

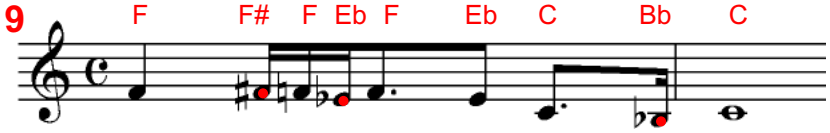
The following 3 patterns are nearly the same. The second riff has just got an added C note on TOP of the first note. This is a common blues trick. In the third riff the 2nd to 5th notes are played very quickly which is a riff in itself. LISTEN to the recording!

7

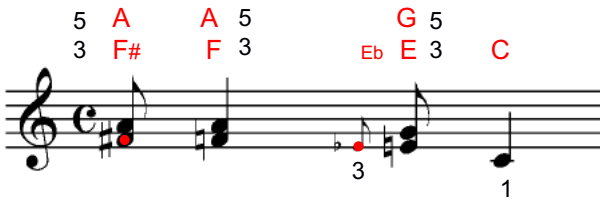


8

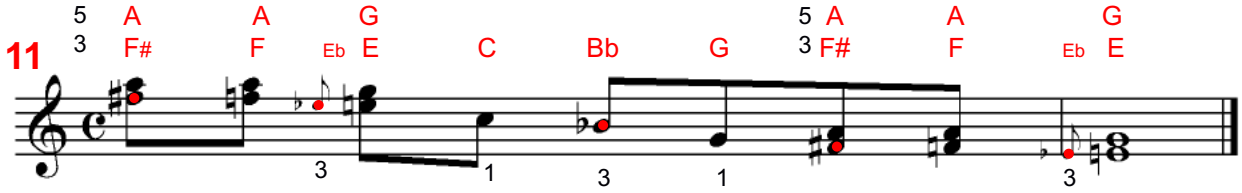


9

Blues riffs very often use ‘double’ notes - this gives an extra ‘ring’ and you often SLIDE on to the notes from a flat note.

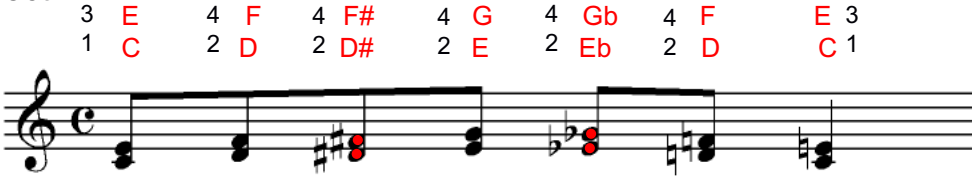
10



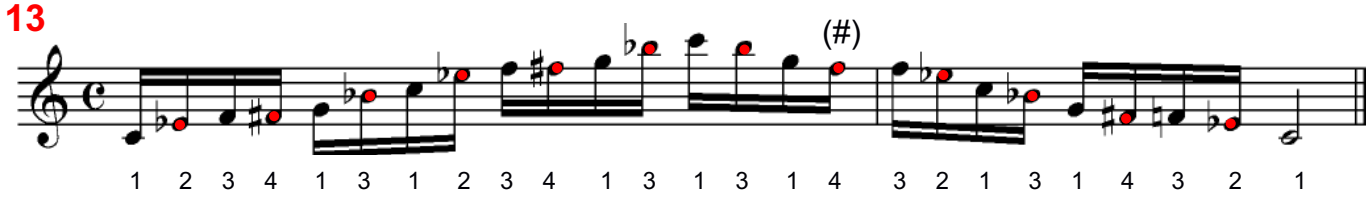
11



You will have heard the following riff a million times. Try transposing it to F and G for better effect.

12

This is the C BLUES SCALE over two octaves up and down.
The trick is getting the fingering right. Sounds great though doesn’t it?

13

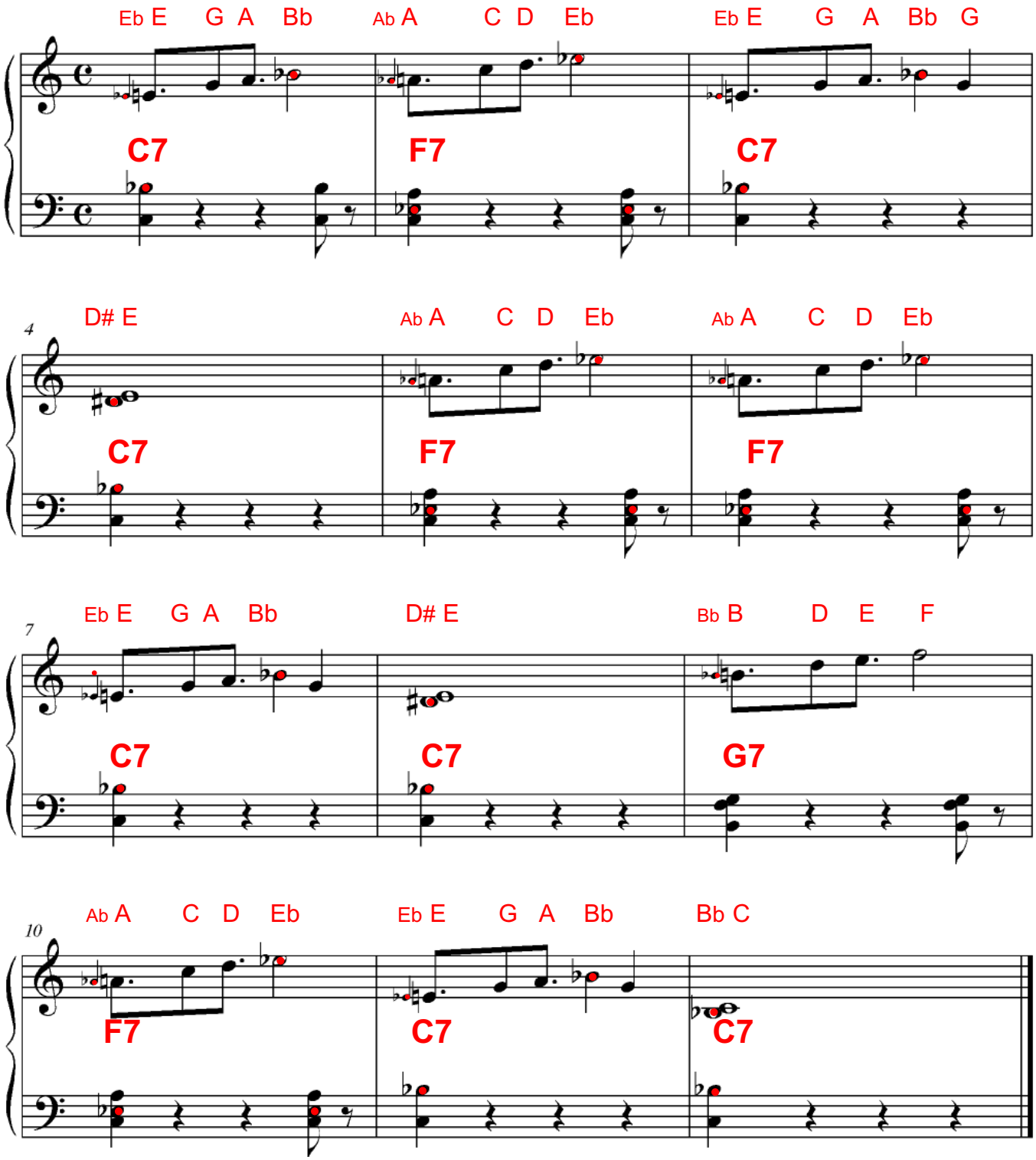


Ceasy BLUES

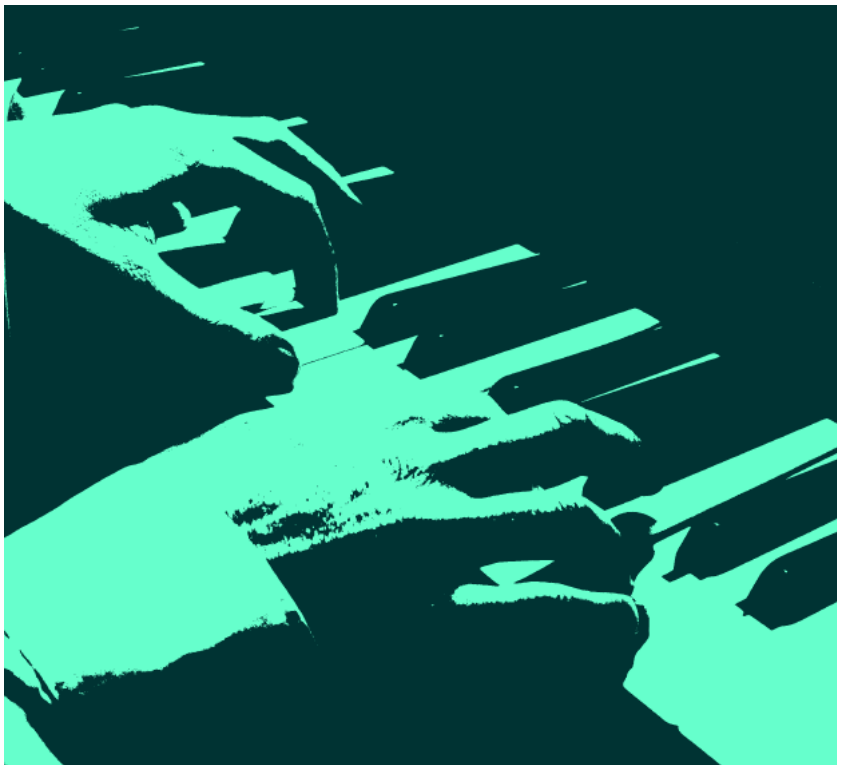
This cool blues tune will help you feel the ‘groove’.
Play it over and over and then try to improvise in one or two bars. You may surprise yourself!

It’s hard to show the true rhythm in written notation - go by the recording!

THELONIOUS MONK - CRUELLA DE VILLE BLUES



NOW IT'S TIME TO JAZZ THINGS UP..



C MAJOR JAZZ

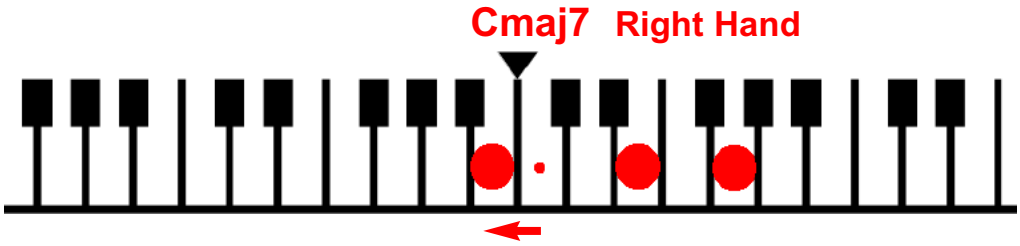
JAZZ STANDARDS AND SHOW TUNES
MADE EASY

The Ballad style you learned earlier can work for many jazz standards and show tunes but there is another (often easier and better) way to approach this style of music.

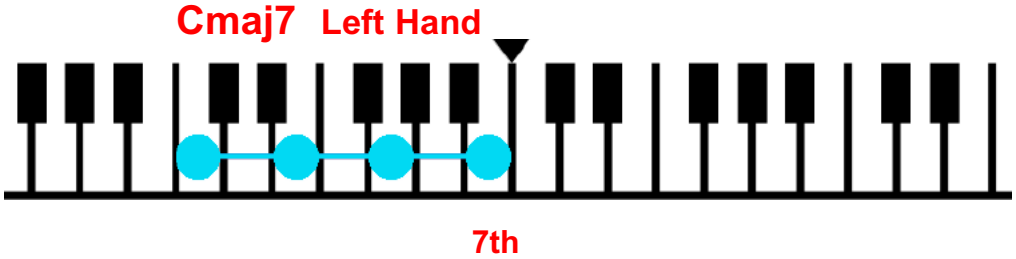
Because jazz standards and show tunes use a lot of interesting combinations of 7th chords you can often 'get away with' simply playing each chord ONCE with your LEFT HAND while you play the melody with your right hand.

Playing seventh chords in your LEFT HAND is different from how you learned to form them in your RIGHT hand.

For instance, to form 7th chords in your RIGHT HAND you learned to move your thumb from the ROOT note TO the seventh.



But to form 7th chords in your **LEFT HAND** for use with show tune melodies the 7th note is simply ADDED to the basic 3 note chord.



When playing 4-note 7th chords with your left hand use fingers 5 4 2 1 (don't use MIDDLE finger).

THE C FAMILY 7th CHORDS

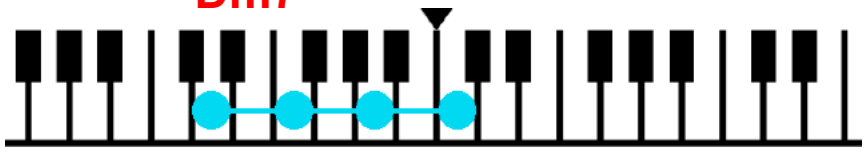
Practice the following chords until your fingers get used to playing 4-note chords

ALL LEFT HAND

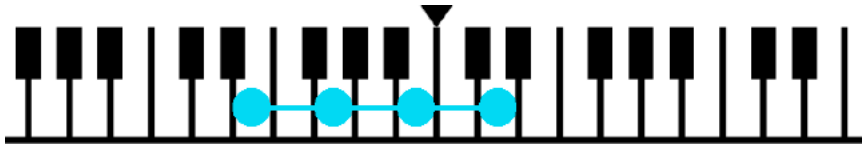
FINGERING

Cmaj7

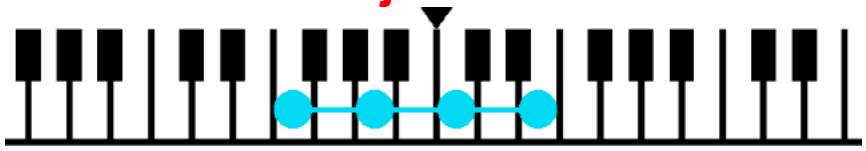
Dm7



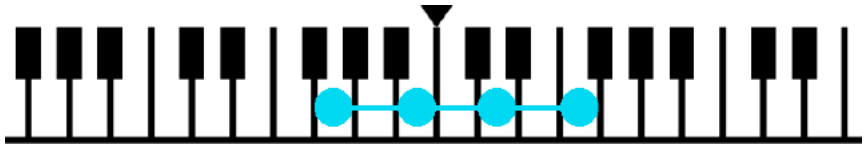
Em7



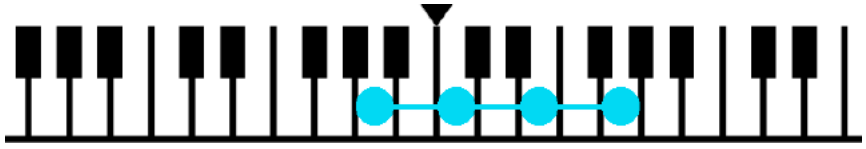
Fmaj7



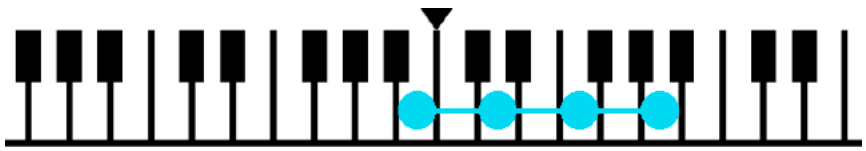
G7



Am7



B^{o}7



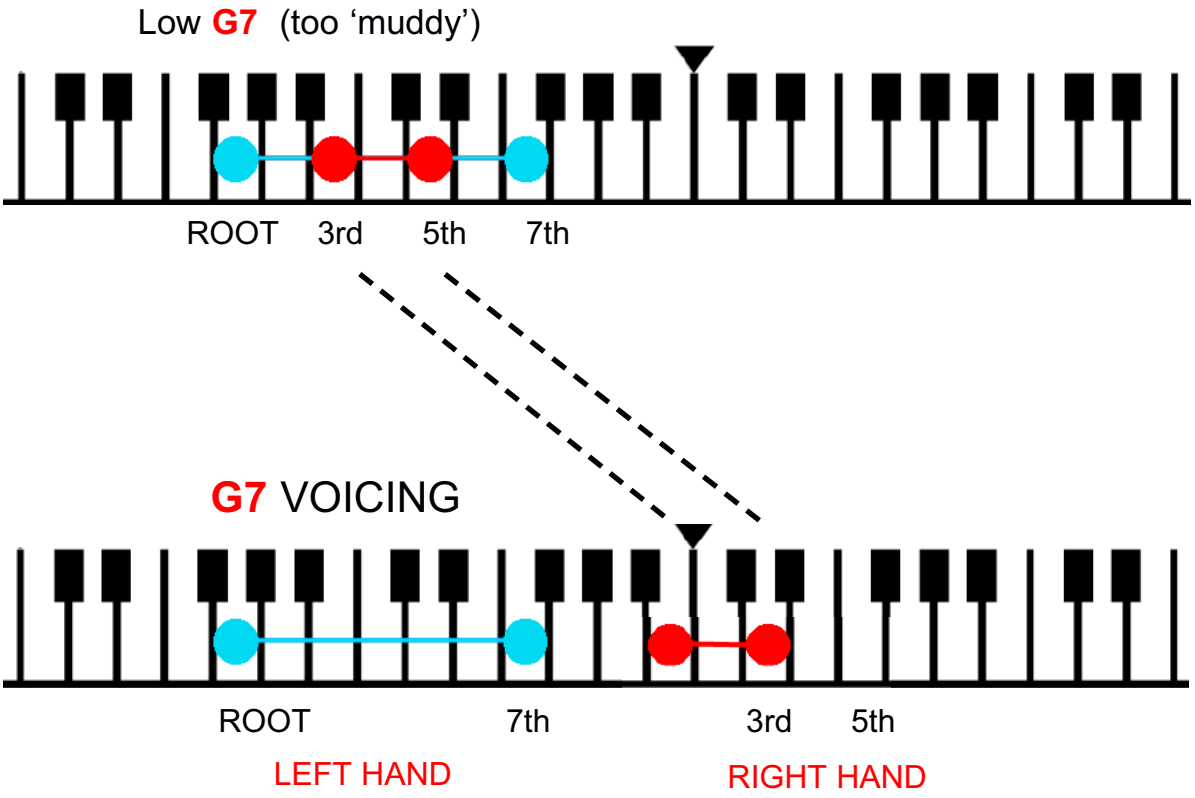
Play them nice and slow. Do you hear the slightly 'JAZZY' sound?

VOICINGS FOR SHOW TUNES

4-note left hand 7th chords sound okay when played near to middle C, but, unless you are playing on an expensive grand piano, 4-note chords can sound rather ‘muddy’ the lower you play them on the keyboard.

So if, for instance, you wanted to play a 4-note G7 chord quite low down the keyboard because your melody line was around middle C (and would get in the way if the chord was played nearer middle C) what you would have to do is play a **VOICING of G7**.

To make a VOICING you simply play the root note of the chord AND the 7th in the LEFT HAND (you can play the 2 remaining notes of the chord an octave higher with your RIGHT HAND.)



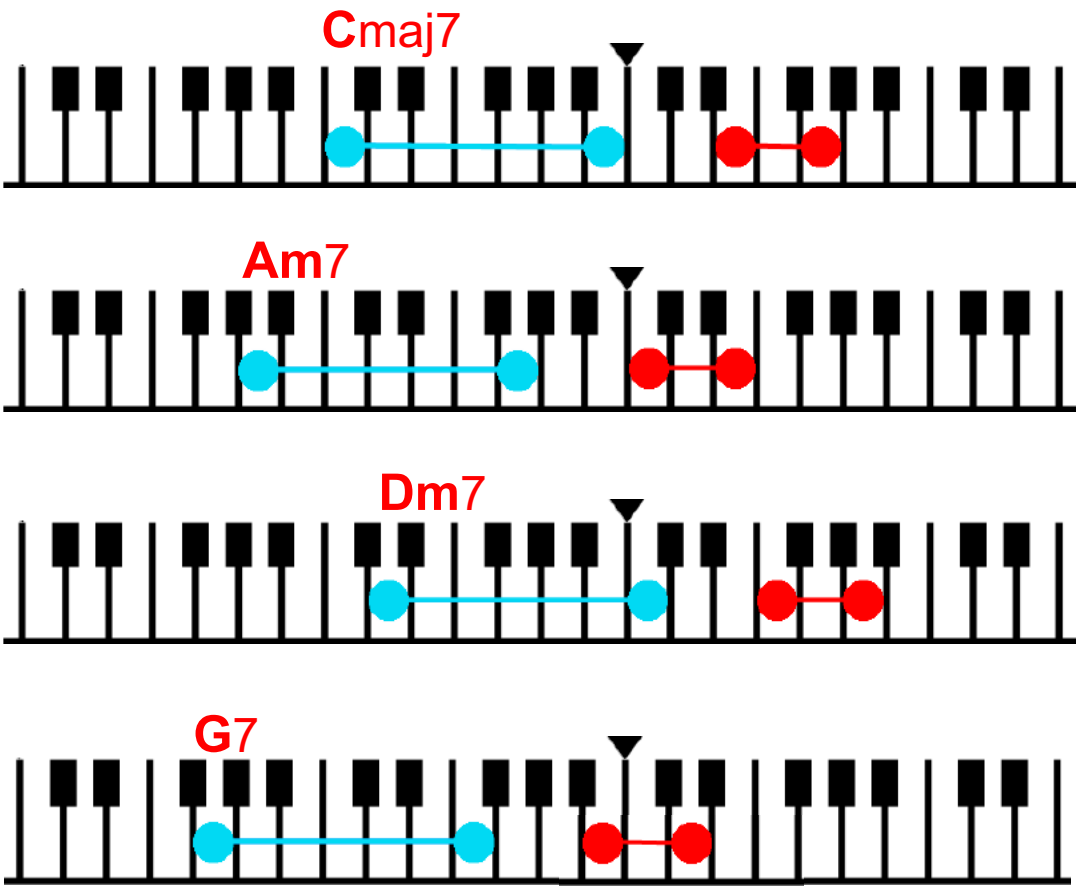
You will hear the difference.
VOICINGS of ‘low’ chords will sound much cleaner and ‘sweeter’.

You don’t HAVE to play the 2 ‘Middle’ notes in your RIGHT HAND
you can play any chord notes or just the melody notes.

VOICING A CLASSIC CHORD PROGRESSION

Try these voicings and see if you can sing along with

- **BLUE MOON**
- **JUST THE WAY YOU LOOK TONIGHT**
- **STORMY WEATHER**
- **CAN'T HELP LOVIN' THAT MAN OF MINE**
- **MORE** (than the greatest love the world has known...)



REPEAT

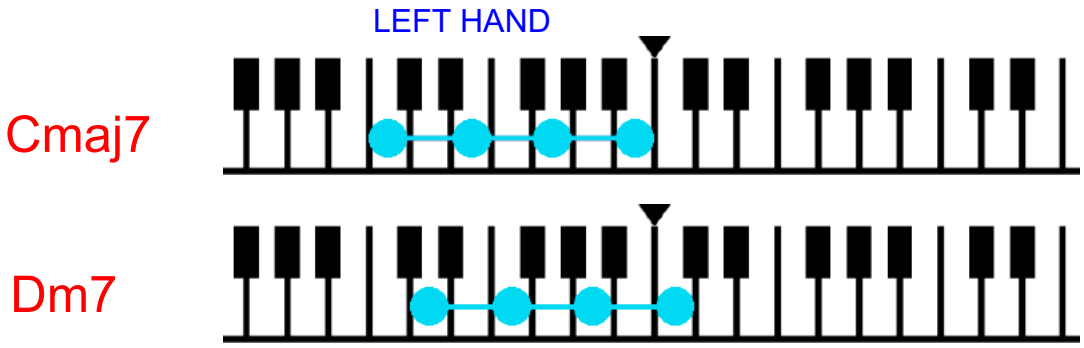
USE THE NOTES OF THE VOICING TO CREATE RHYTHMIC PATTERNS

Play the voicings again but this time imagine you are playing one of the tunes mentioned above. Imagine you are playing the Bongos very slowly - two left hand fingers on the left drum and two right hand fingers on the right drum. EXPERIMENT with a variety of combinations - make mistakes - have fun!

FRERE JACQUE JAZZ part 1

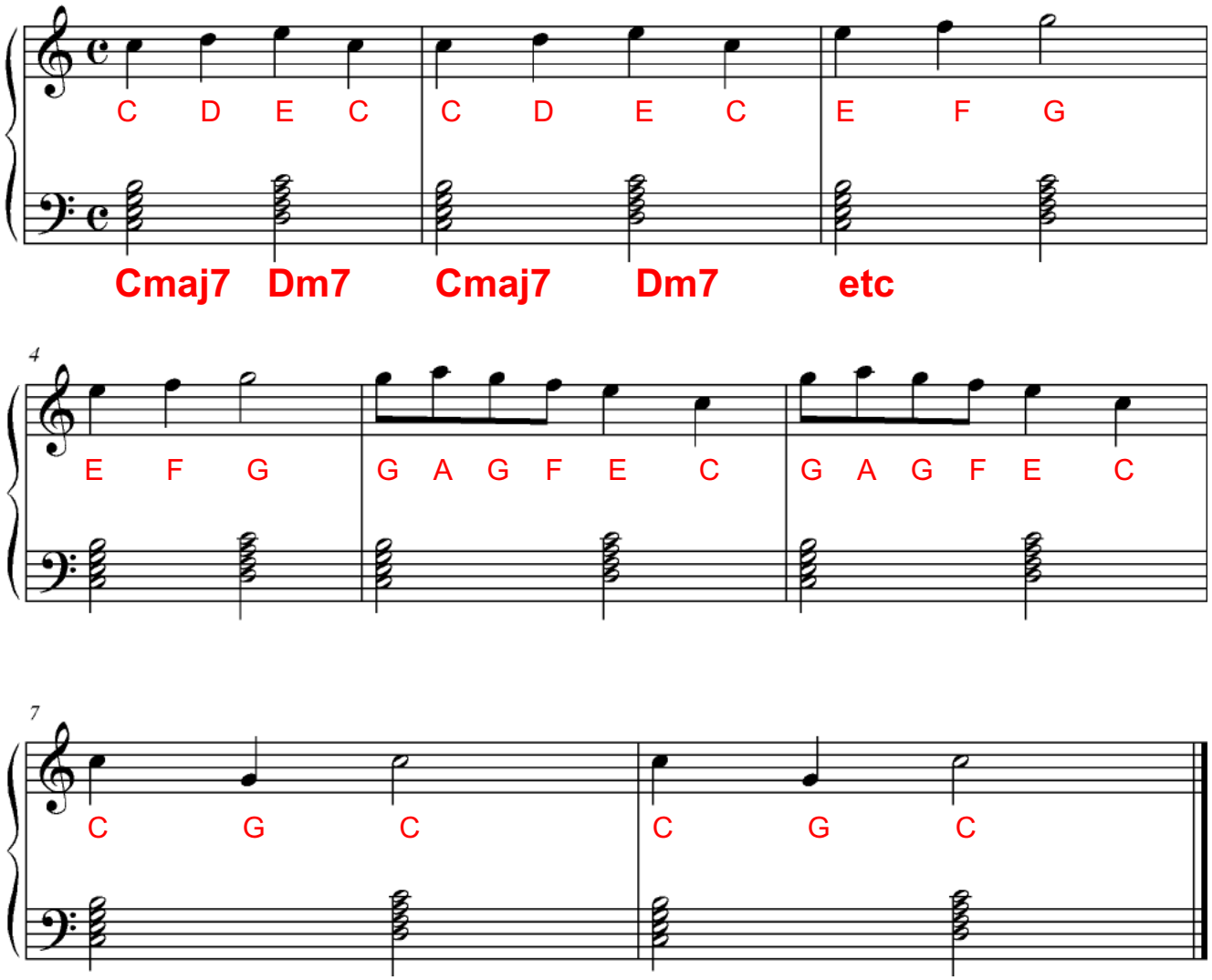
Let's try something easy.

Play the chords of Cmaj7 and Dm7 in your LEFT hand. Play each chord for two beats and keep repeating. You will play these two chords throughout the song.



Now play Frere Jacque in your RIGHT hand.

FRERE JACQUE JAZZ



FRERE JACQUE JAZZ part 2

Now let's **JAZZ** the left hand up a bit.

Jazz rhythms are difficult to write down so pay close attention to the recording and see if you can copy it

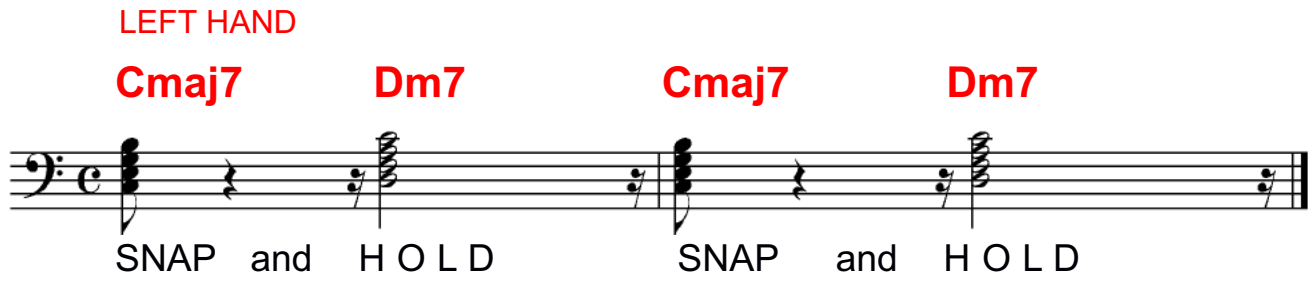
Instead of playing the two chords with two straight beats each - play the Cmaj7 as if you are 'SNAPPING' a quick half beat.
Then just slightly before the third beat play and H-O-L-D the Dm7

Verbally it sounds like

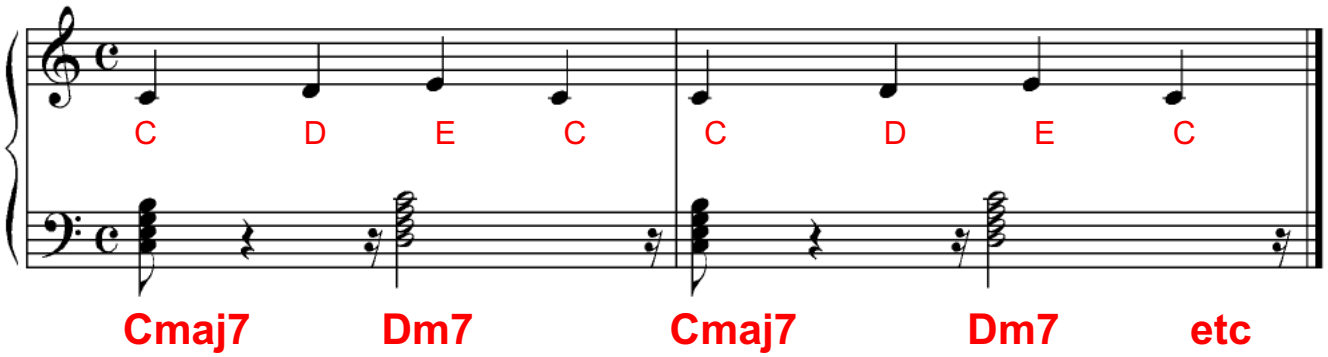
Cmaj7 Dm7 Cmaj7 Dm7 Cmaj7 Dm7

"SNAP and H O L D SNAP and H O L D Snap and H O L D...."

Here's what it looks like in written notation



Try both hands together - then try the whole tune again

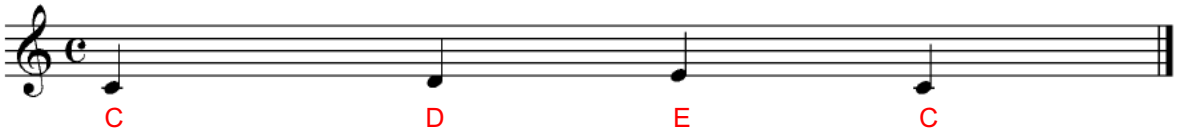


FRERE JACQUE JAZZ
IMPROVISING ON THE MELODY LINE

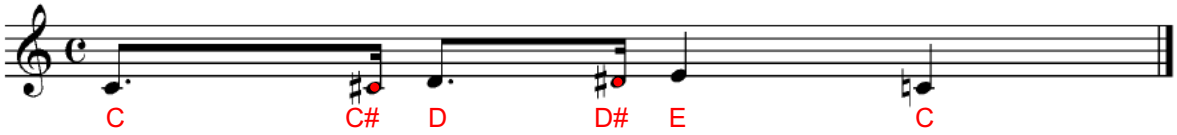
OK - You've Jazzed up the left hand - so what about the RIGHT hand?

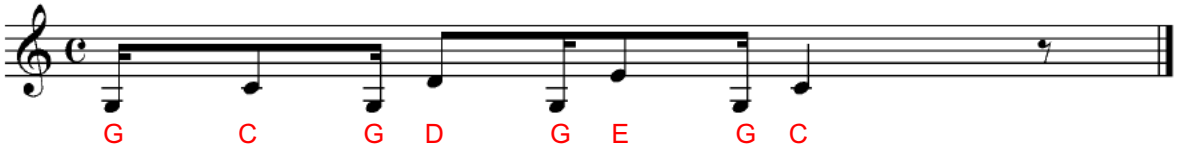
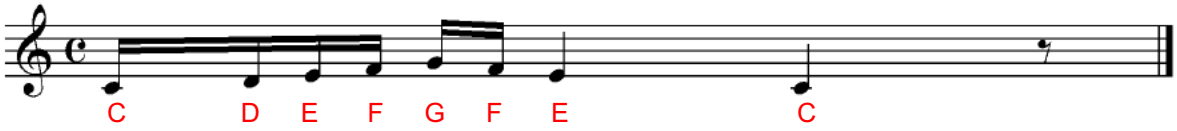
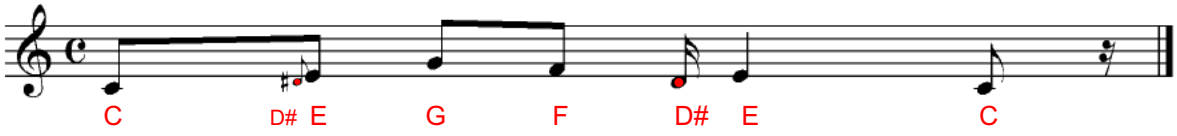
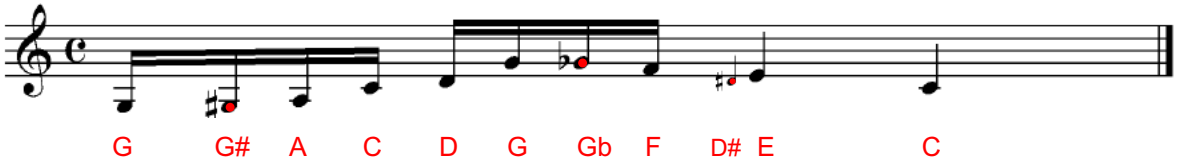
The easiest way to improvise on a melody line is to SING it a few times and add in a few extra notes IN BETWEEN the main melody notes.

1. The actual first four notes of Frere Jaque



2. Add 'passing' chromatic notes (notes that are a half tone apart)



3. Bounce off a chord tone

4. Use scale notes of the key you are in (C major)

5. Use notes from the Blues Scale

6. See how far removed you can get

4 Note Jazz Chord **INVERSIONS**

Earlier you learned how to play your right hand 3 note chords as INVERSIONS - Middle Inversion and Backwards Inversion

You can do the same with the 4 note LEFT hand Jazz chords

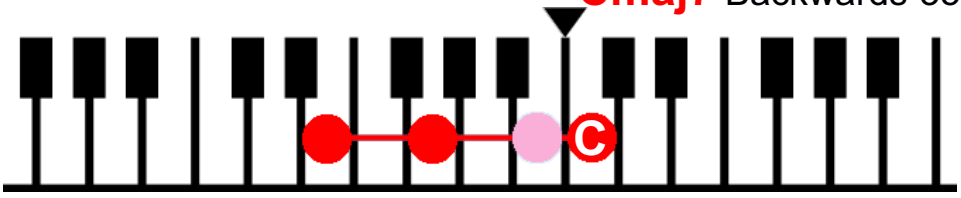
For instance.

ALL LEFT HAND

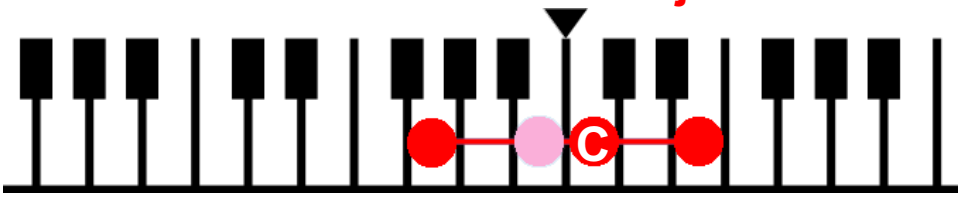
(Fingering - leave out your middle finger in all three chords)

Cmaj7 Root position 1 3 5 7

Cmaj7 Backwards 3571 Inversion



Cmaj7 Middle 5713 Inversion



3rd finger on ROOT note

Cmaj7 '7135' Inversion

2nd finger on ROOT note

THE CATERPILLAR JAZZ WALK

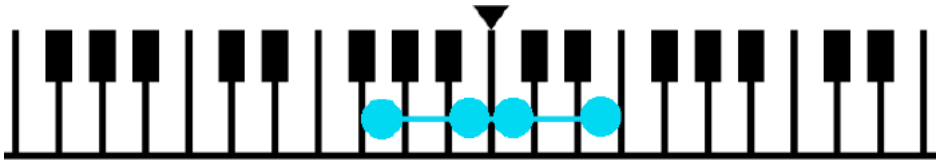
Now try this classic chord progression that uses ROOT position chords and MIDDLE (5713) inversions.
Notice how your hand ‘walks’ down the keyboard like a CATERPILLAR

Play it VERY slowly and then try making up slow jazzy melodies with ANY white keys in your RIGHT hand. Jazz magic!

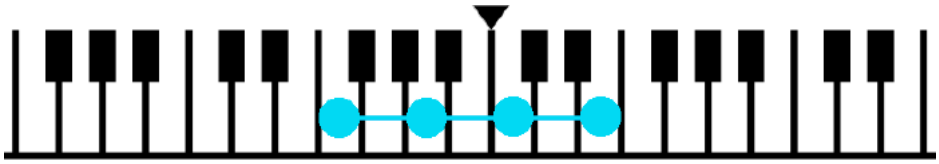
ALL LEFT HAND

(Fingering - leave out your middle finger in all chords)

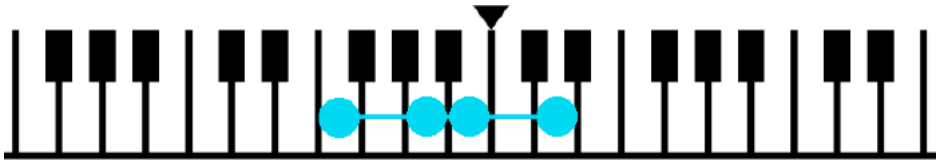
Cmaj7
Middle Inversion



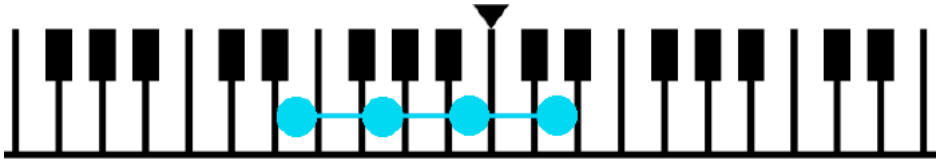
Fmaj7



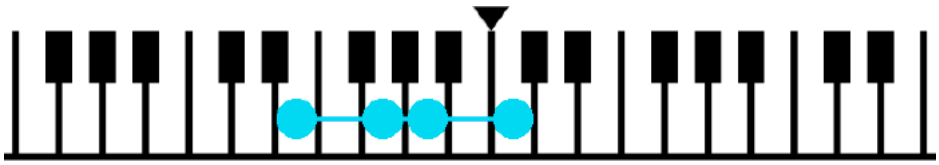
B^{o}7
Middle Inversion



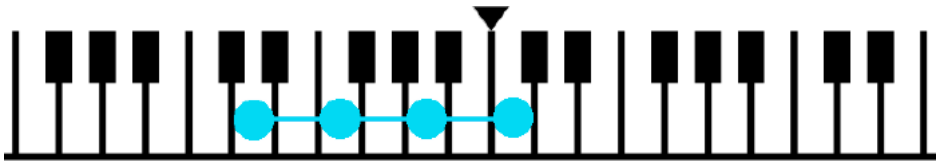
Em7



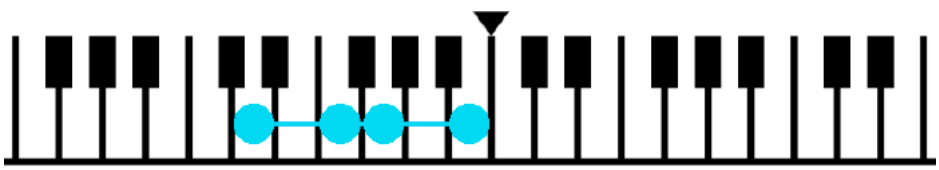
Am7
Middle Inversion



Dm7



G7
Middle Inversion



Cmaj7

CATERPILLAR JAZZ TALK

HOW TO CREATE MELODIES - the language of Jazz and Blues

Most song melodies are based on **WORDS and SENTENCES**. Songwriters rarely write a melody and then add words to it later, they usually start with a mixture of lyrics, chords and melody.

A melody or an improvisation is like a **CONVERSATION** - listen to people talking - you could almost hear it like a song.

"Hi Joan, how are you"	(fast and upbeat)
"HENRY - I never thought I'd see you again!!	(shocked, loud, snappy)
"I've been unwell"	(sombre, slower)
"I'm sorry to hear that"	(sympathetic)
"I'm ok now"	(more upbeat again)
"That's great, how's the kids'	(optimistic)
"DIDN'T YOU HEAR"	(tension)
"WHAT?"	(worried)
etc	

Can you see the **variety** contained in even a short conversation. The different lengths, different volumes, different speeds, different pitches - you might hear a woman with a high voice and a man with a low voice, the tension, release, excitement, anger, boredom, sadness, joy, some people talk too much, some just grunt words

Use these ideas when you are creating melodies or improvising. Don't just play random notes. Do you TALK randomly? Ask **questions** in one phrase and **reply** in the next phrase.

To begin with stick closely to the **CHORD TONES** to form your phrases. So if you are playing Em7 chord in the left hand play around with the same chord tones in your right hand adding the odd 'in-between' note to liven it up. As you progress you can be more daring but work up to that.

Try playing the **CATERPILLAR JAZZ WALK** again and create a CONVERSATION with your RIGHT hand notes. Play it nice and slow. **THINK** about what you are doing, IMAGINE two people talking, it could be two lovers, or an argument, or just someone talking to themselves about a lost love or a past regret.

There are ideas to help you on the next few pages

CATERPILLAR JAZZ TALK

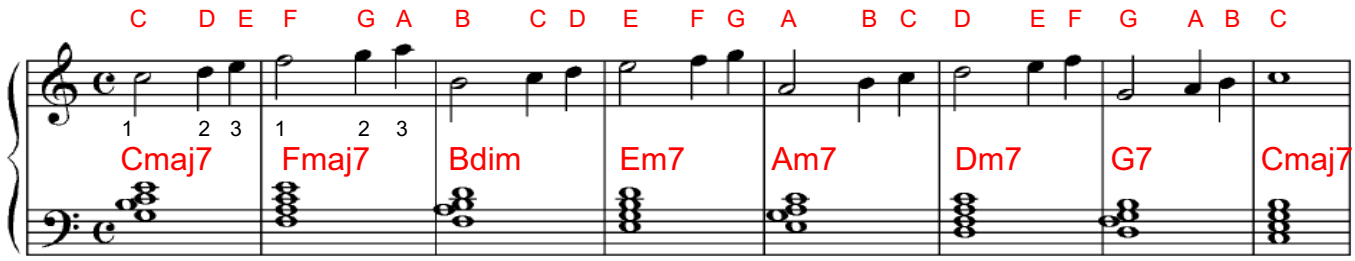
Ideas for Improvisation

The following are a series of right hand melodic patterns that you can play with the caterpillar chords.

PATTERN 1. Root - 2nd - 3rd

This is a simple riff. On each chord change play the root note then the 2nd and third

SMOOTH

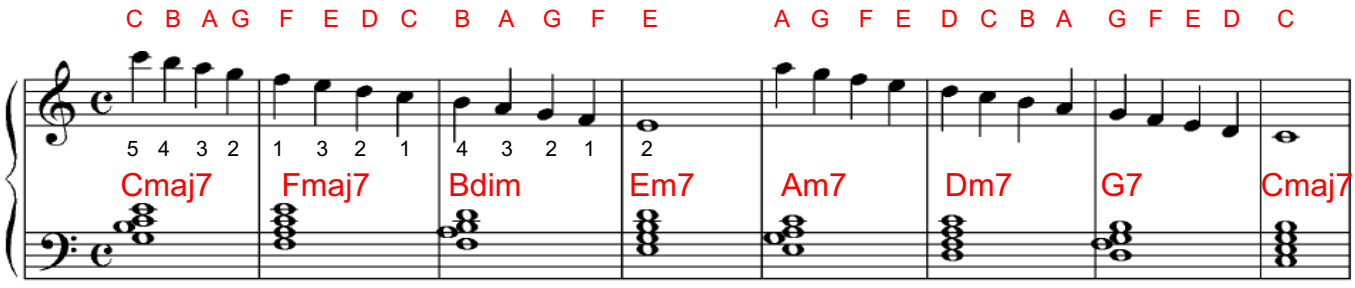


SWING

PATTERN 2. USING THE C MAJOR SCALE (downwards)

Notice how certain notes of the scale actually correspond to the root note of the chord change.

SMOOTH

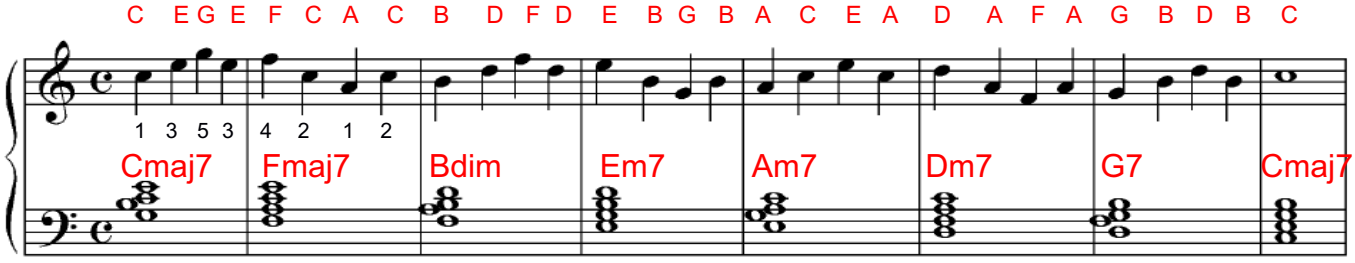


SWING

PATTERN 3. TRIADS

Only use the basic (3 note) chord notes in the right hand (leave out the 7th)
Move from root position to backwards inversion.

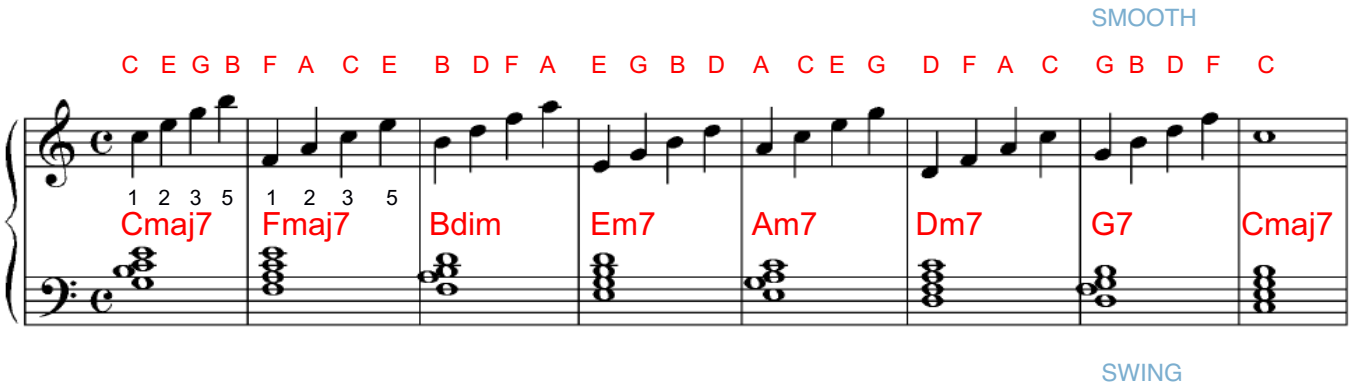
SMOOTH



SWING

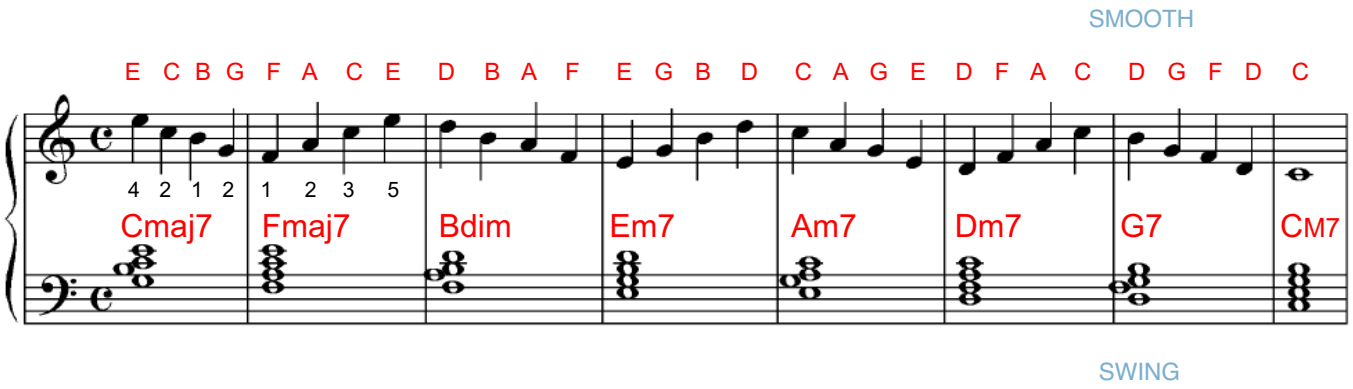
PATTERN 4. ROOT POSITION broken 7th CHORDS

Just play broken 7th chords root position.



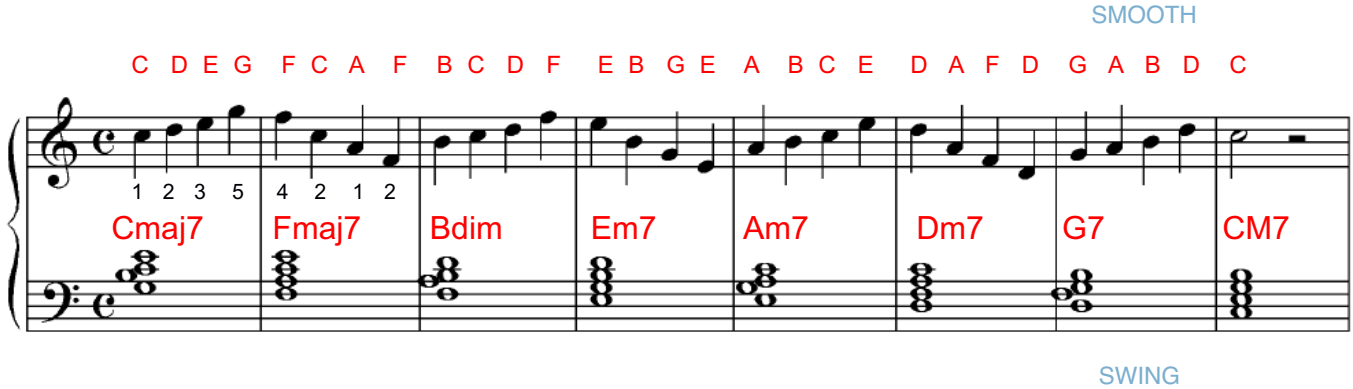
PATTERN 5. MIRROR THE LEFT HAND 7TH CHORD NOTES

The right hand is using the same chord note positions as the left hand.
Start with the chord going downwards.



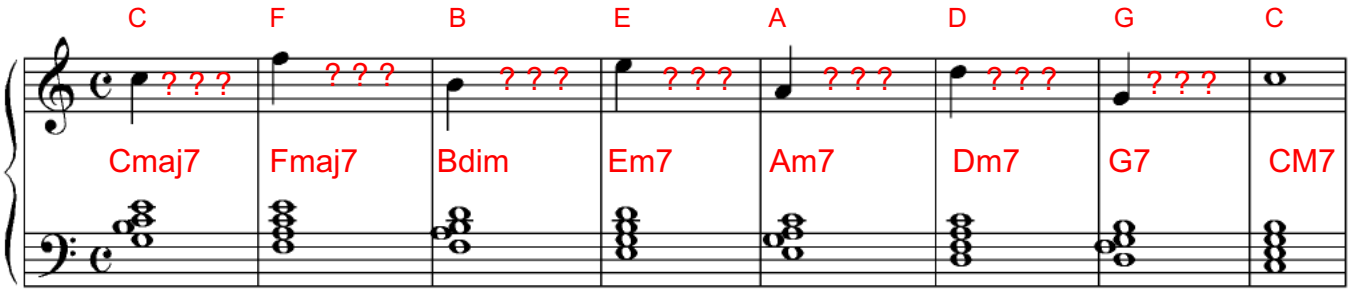
PATTERN 6. MIX SCALE PATTERN AND CHORD NOTES

Notice the first bar uses a scale pattern - 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 5th
then the next bar uses the basic ‘triad’ chord notes backwards and so on.



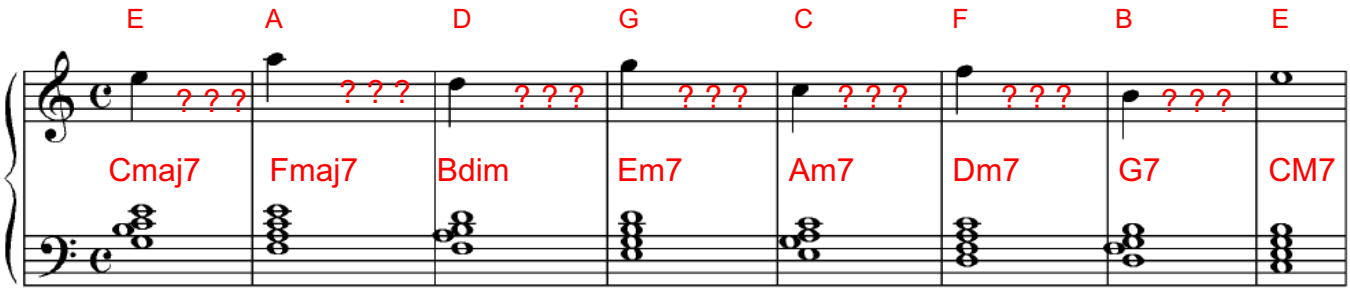
PATTERN 7. START EACH BAR WITH THE ROOT OF THE CHORD

Then improvise the remainder of the bar. Remember that you don't HAVE to play four notes in each bar.



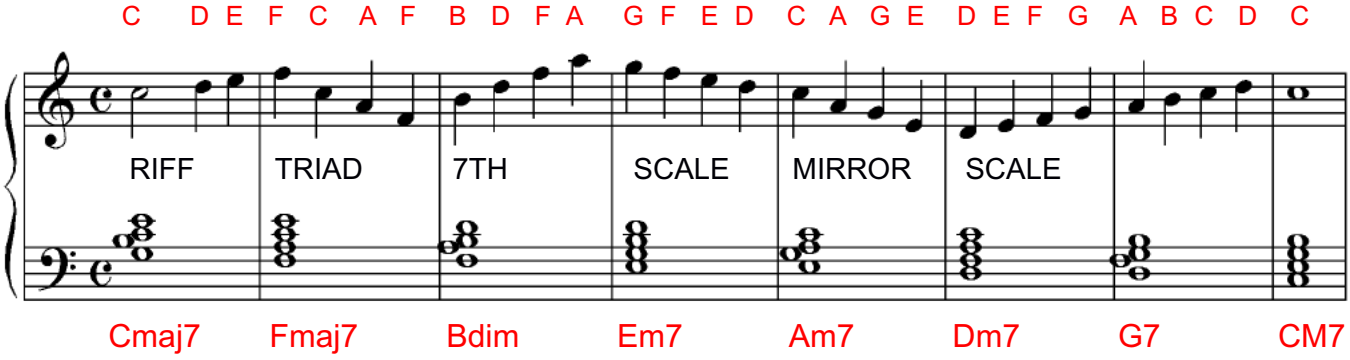
PATTERN 8. START EACH BAR WITH THE THIRD OF THE CHORD

Try the same as you did for riff 7 then try starting on the 5th and even the 7th.



PATTERN 9. MIX IT UP

This is where you get to experiment with all the various ideas.
It is better to have SOME kind of underlying structure to start with or fall back on.
This is why jazz musicians practice scales and patterns.



CATERPILLAR JAZZ TALK

Learn from Beethoven

Newcomers to improvisation often play too many random notes because they imagine that if they just played one or two at a time it would sound like they had nothing to ‘say’.

But if you look at some of the world’s greatest composers they OFTEN used just ONE or TWO phrases as the basis of some of their finest compositions.

Think about Beethoven’s Fifth Symphony.
Everyone knows that famous opening phrase
‘Da da da Daah - da da da daah’

If you really listen closely you will discover that he repeats this basic pattern a seemingly ENDLESS number of times. It’s clearly what you DO with the pattern that counts.

The next time you listen to some Jazz notice how often patterns are repeated either in an ascending or descending way and they sound GREAT!

PREDICTABILITY and UNCERTAINTY

The best songs tend to have a balance between predictability and uncertainty. It’s nice - at times - to be able to guess where the song is going to go next . This can make us feel part of the creation of the song but If the song becomes TOO predictable it can become boring. It’s exciting to be led in another direction now and then. This keeps our interest.

Think about this when you are improvising or writing melodies. Don’t be afraid to be predictable or repetitive but try to maintain interest as well even if that means using ONE riff in an amazing variety of ways like Mr Beethoven!

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER
JINGLE BELLS JAZZ

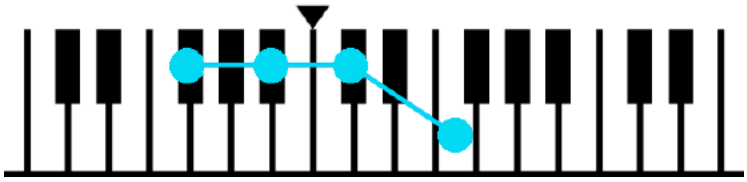
This jazzy Christmas tune brings together all the elements you have learned so far.

- The C FAMILY SEVEN chords
- The ‘SNAP H O L D’ swing rhythm
- The CATERPILLAR movement
- Coordinating the Right and Left hands

It’s really not that hard but it sounds GREAT!

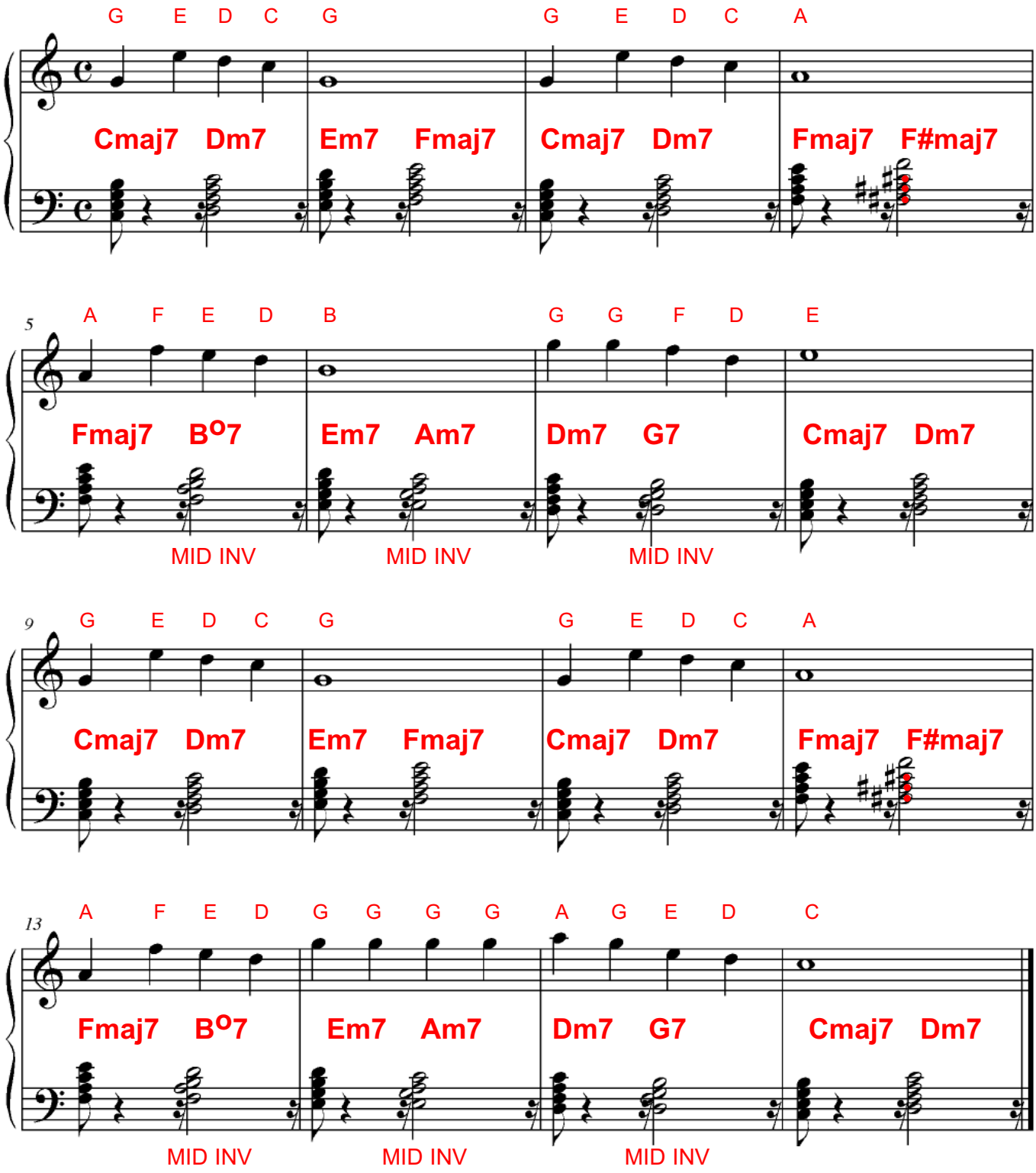
Watch out for the F# maj7 chord. This chord adds a bit of colour and tension. You bounce from the Fmaj7 onto the F#maj7 back to the Fmaj7

F#maj7

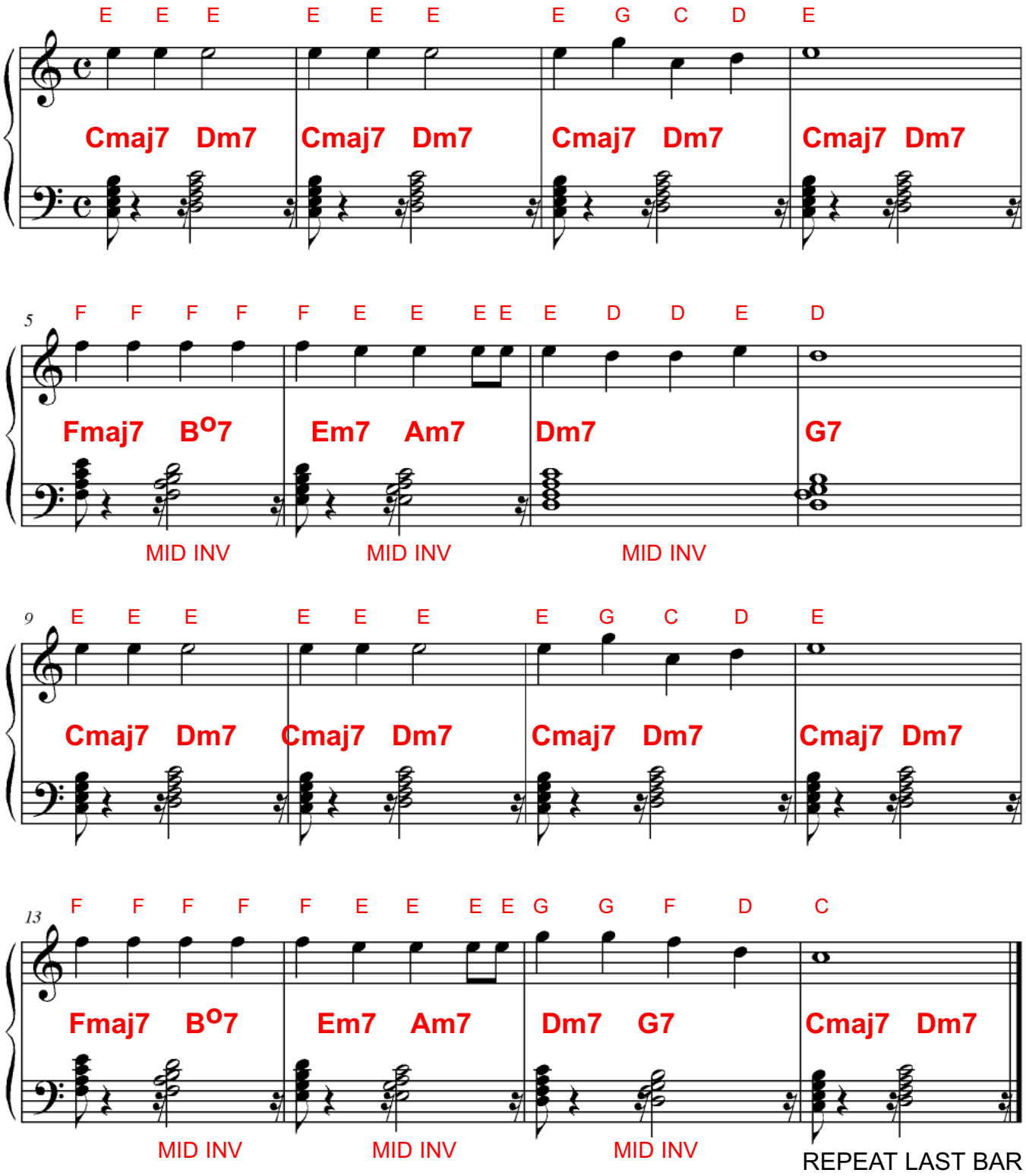


JINGLE BELLS JAZZ
page 1

‘SWING’


G E D C G G E D C A
Cmaj7 Dm7 Em7 Fmaj7 Cmaj7 Dm7 Fmaj7 F#maj7
5
A F E D B G G F D E
Fmaj7 B°7 Em7 Am7 Dm7 G7 Cmaj7 Dm7
MID INV MID INV MID INV
9
G E D C G G E D C A
Cmaj7 Dm7 Em7 Fmaj7 Cmaj7 Dm7 Fmaj7 F#maj7
13
A F E D G G G G A G E D C
Fmaj7 B°7 Em7 Am7 Dm7 G7 Cmaj7 Dm7
MID INV MID INV MID INV

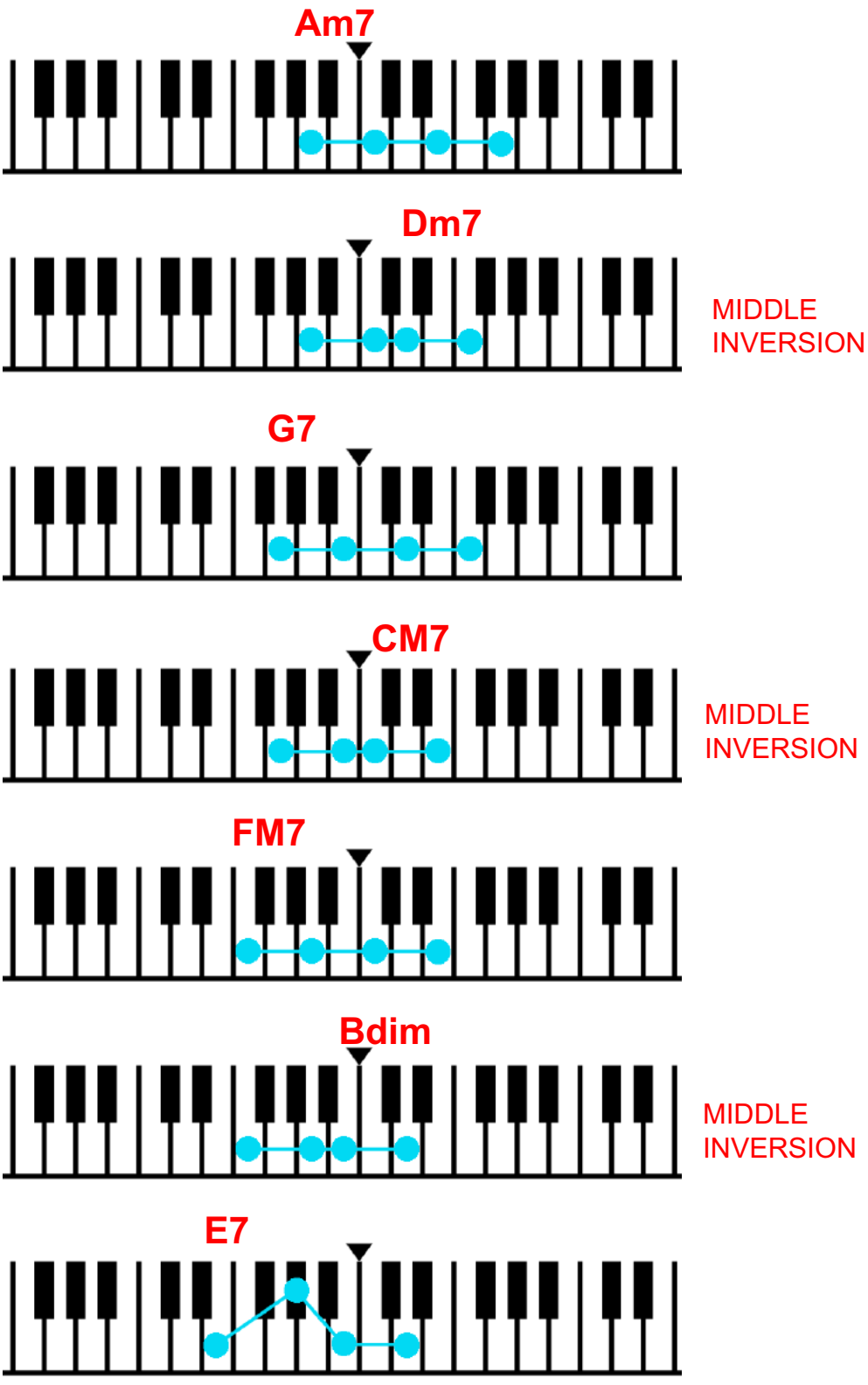
JINGLE BELLS JAZZ
page 2


E E E E E E E G C D E
Cmaj7 Dm7 Cmaj7 Dm7 Cmaj7 Dm7 Cmaj7 Dm7
5
F F F F F E E E E E D D E D
Fmaj7 B°7 Em7 Am7 Dm7 G7
MID INV MID INV MID INV
9
E E E E E E E G C D E
Cmaj7 Dm7 Cmaj7 Dm7 Cmaj7 Dm7 Cmaj7 Dm7
13
F F F F F E E E E G G F D C
Fmaj7 B°7 Em7 Am7 Dm7 G7 Cmaj7 Dm7
MID INV MID INV MID INV
REPEAT LAST BAR

Aminor CATERPILLAR

Fly Me To The Moon / Autumn Leaves

Try the CATERPILLAR chord progression but this time start with a Root position Am7 and ‘caterpillar’ until you reach E7. This is a very common progression used in songs like Fly Me To The Moon and Autumn Leaves.
See if you can work out the melody in the right hand

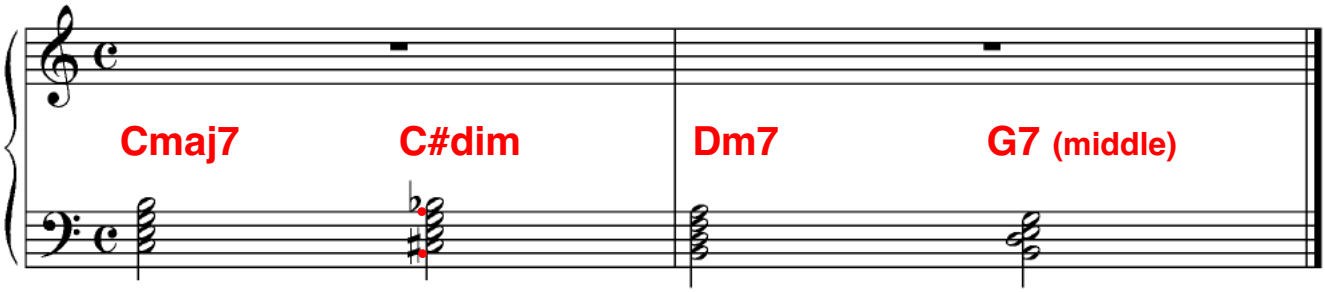


ANOTHER FUN PROGRESSION TO PLAY ALONG WITH

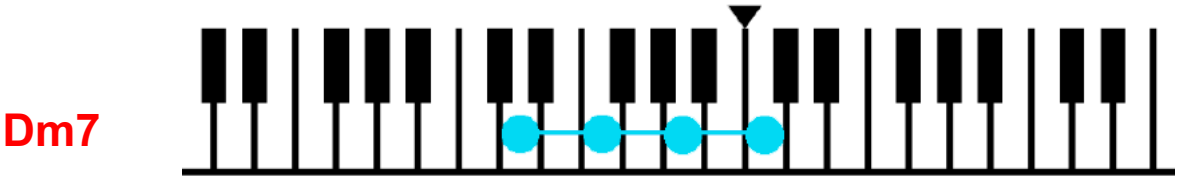
Try these chords and see if you can sing along with (and then PLAY along with)

- **STORMY WEATHER**
- **BLUE MOON**

* **YOU MAKE ME FEEL SO YOUNG**



Hold each chord for 2 beats per bar



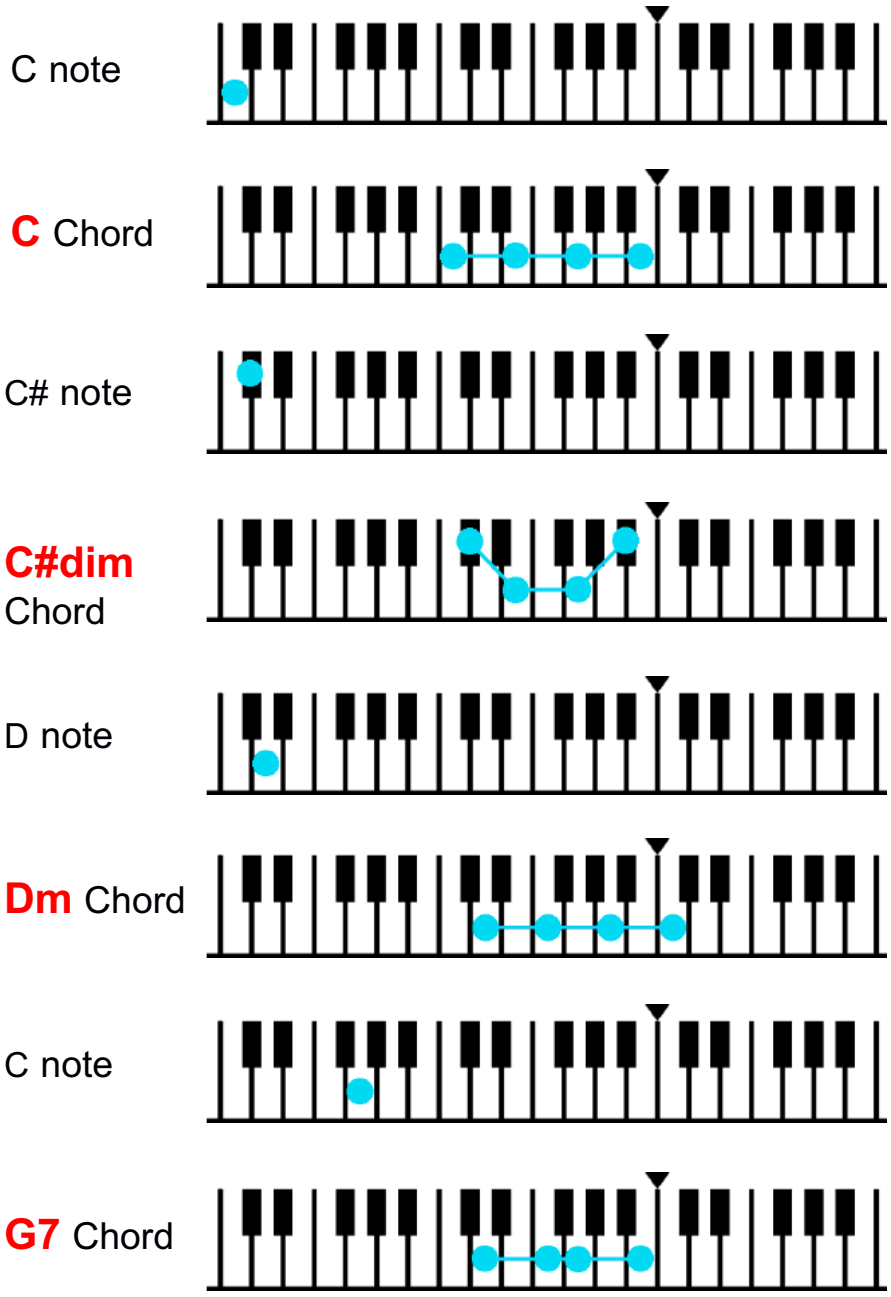
KEEP REPEATING

STRIDING THE CHORDS

Let's try the same progression but this time play it in STRIDE style.

Before you play each chord (LEFT HAND) hit a corresponding single bass note one octave lower down the piano. Practice this repeatedly before you try to add any melody in the Right Hand

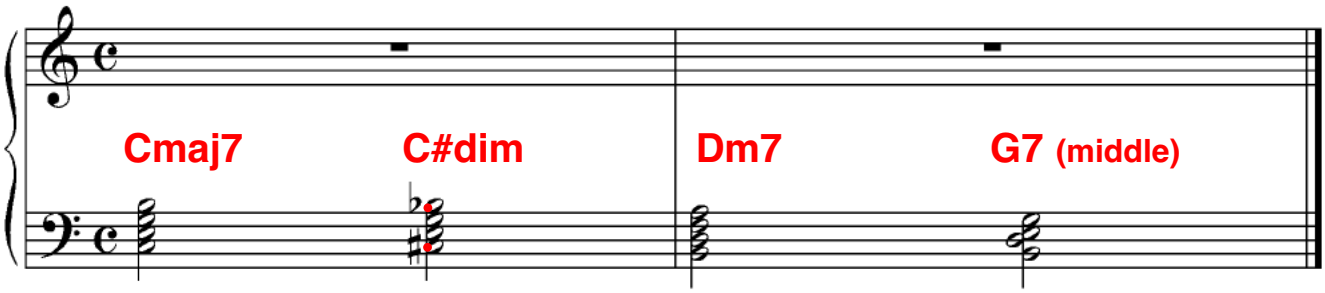
ALL LEFT HAND



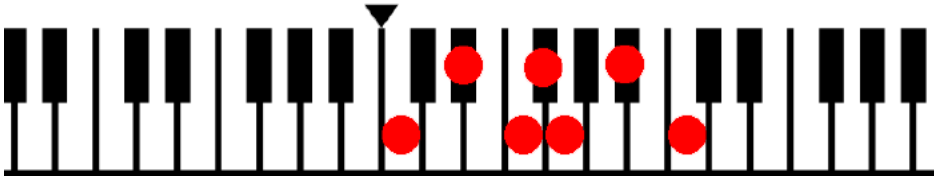
REPEAT

ADD SOME BLUES TO YOUR JAZZ

Let's try adding some BLUE NOTES into your Jazz chords. Improvise with chord notes but now and then throw in some notes from the blues scale. Enjoy!



C BLUES SCALE



D MINOR JAZZ

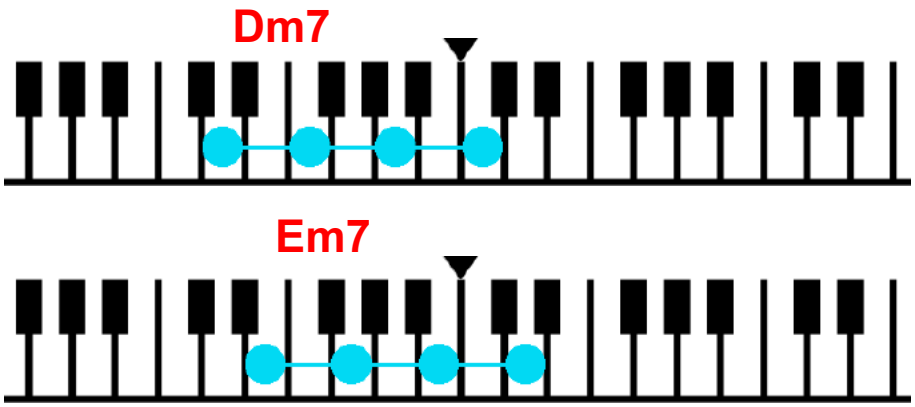
D MINOR JAZZ

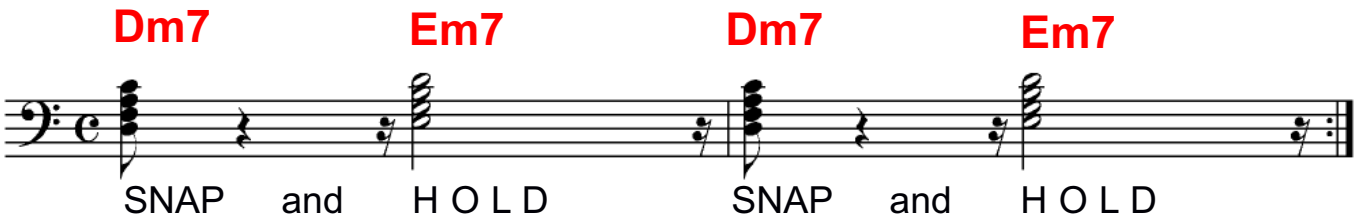
THE CHORDS

A great way to PRACTICE the RHYTHM in jazz is to play with the chords of Dm7 and Em7. If you play these two chords with the ‘snap - h o l d’ rhythm you played for Frere Jaques (page 12) you can play ANY white key over the top and it will sound ‘jazzy’. This allows you to concentrate on rhythm and ‘accent’ and style without having to worry about which notes are safe to play.

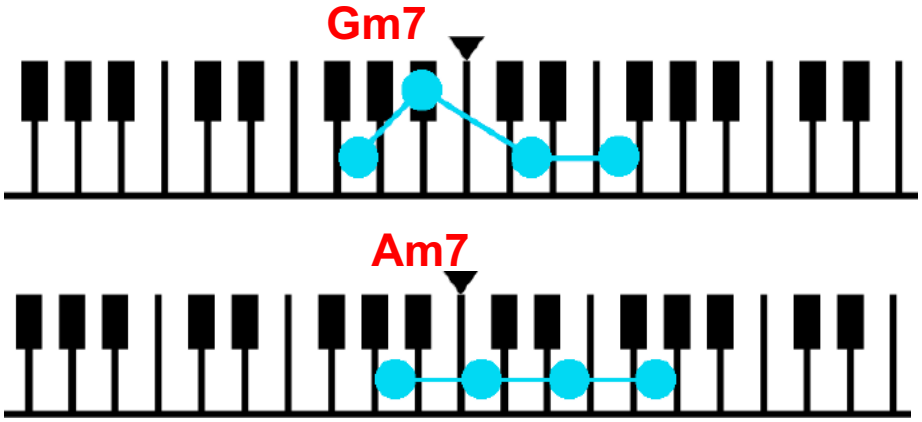
Try the chords and then play the progression on the next page.

THE TWO MAIN CHORDS - repeat as often as you wish for practice purposes



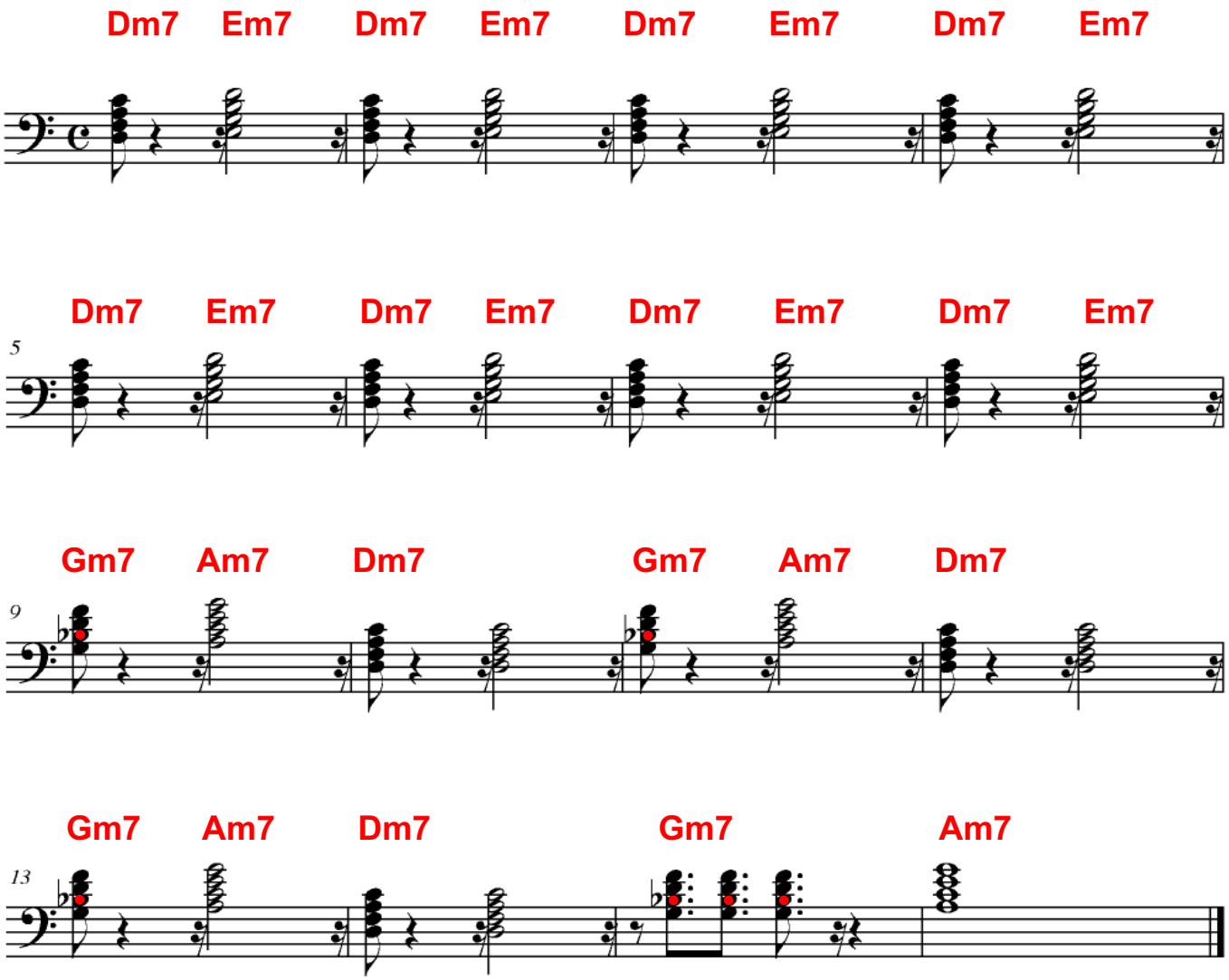


THE ‘TURNAROUND’ CHORDS - use these two chords now and then as a resting point



D MINOR JAZZ
A Dm PROGRESSION

Practice the following progression in your LEFT hand.
Try to get the Jazzy feel - tap your foot - THINK smoky night club!
Don't be put off by the repetitiveness - it's up to you to make every chord swing.
Sing some riffs in your head as you play.



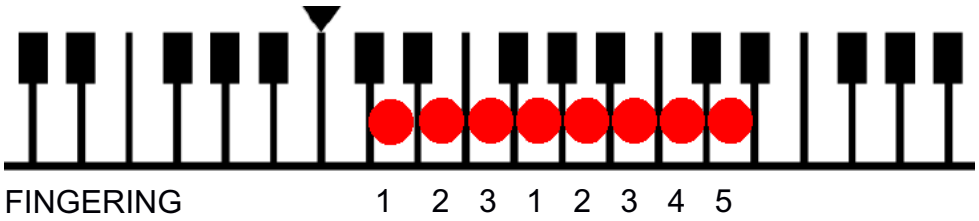
OK - now you're ready for the RIGHT hand. Read on...

D MINOR JAZZ
THE RIGHT HAND GROOVE 1

Jazz melodic lines or improvisations have a distinctive rhythmic ‘swing’.

Think of a scale. Let’s use the scale of Dm7 which will sound great with your D Minor jazz chords.

Dm7 SCALE



In Classical music the scale would be played very accurately ON the beat - like CLOCKWORK

In JAZZ however the scale would be played with a kind of ‘shuffle’ rhythm. The best way I have ever heard the rhythm described was this..

“TEN to TEN to TEN to TEN to TEN to TEN to TEN to TEN to TEN..”

Try the scale again with that rhythm in mind

You could also start the scale on the word ‘TO’

ie **“to TEN to TEN to TEN to TEN to TEN to TEN to TEN..”**

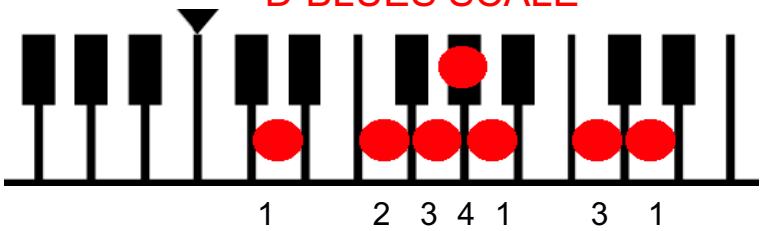
Of course there are endless variations but this is a good rhythm to start with. Keep this as your underlying rhythm even if you speed up or slow down.

It takes LOTS of practice and this is why it is so helpful to play over the D Minor Jazz chords

D MINOR JAZZ
THE RIGHT HAND GROOVE 2

Newcomers to improvisation usually try to run before they can crawl. Take it ONE step at a time. Break the blues scale into segments and experiment with each one. Then join them together. Start with ONE note - yes - ONE! If you can make that ONE note sound good then two notes is a bonus. Then keep adding but don't lose sight of the fact that sometimes 'less is more' (read page 23)

D BLUES SCALE

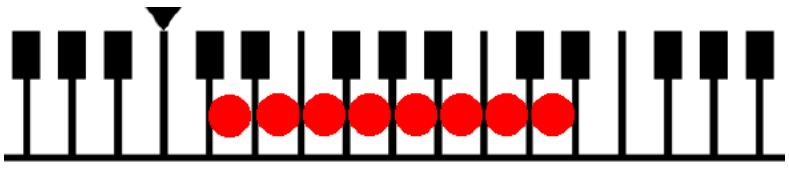


Now break it down into patterns and riffs. Play it one octave higher up so that it doesn't clash with your left hand chords.

2 Octaves

And remember, you can still use the scale of Dm7 (ANY WHITE KEY)

Dm7 SCALE



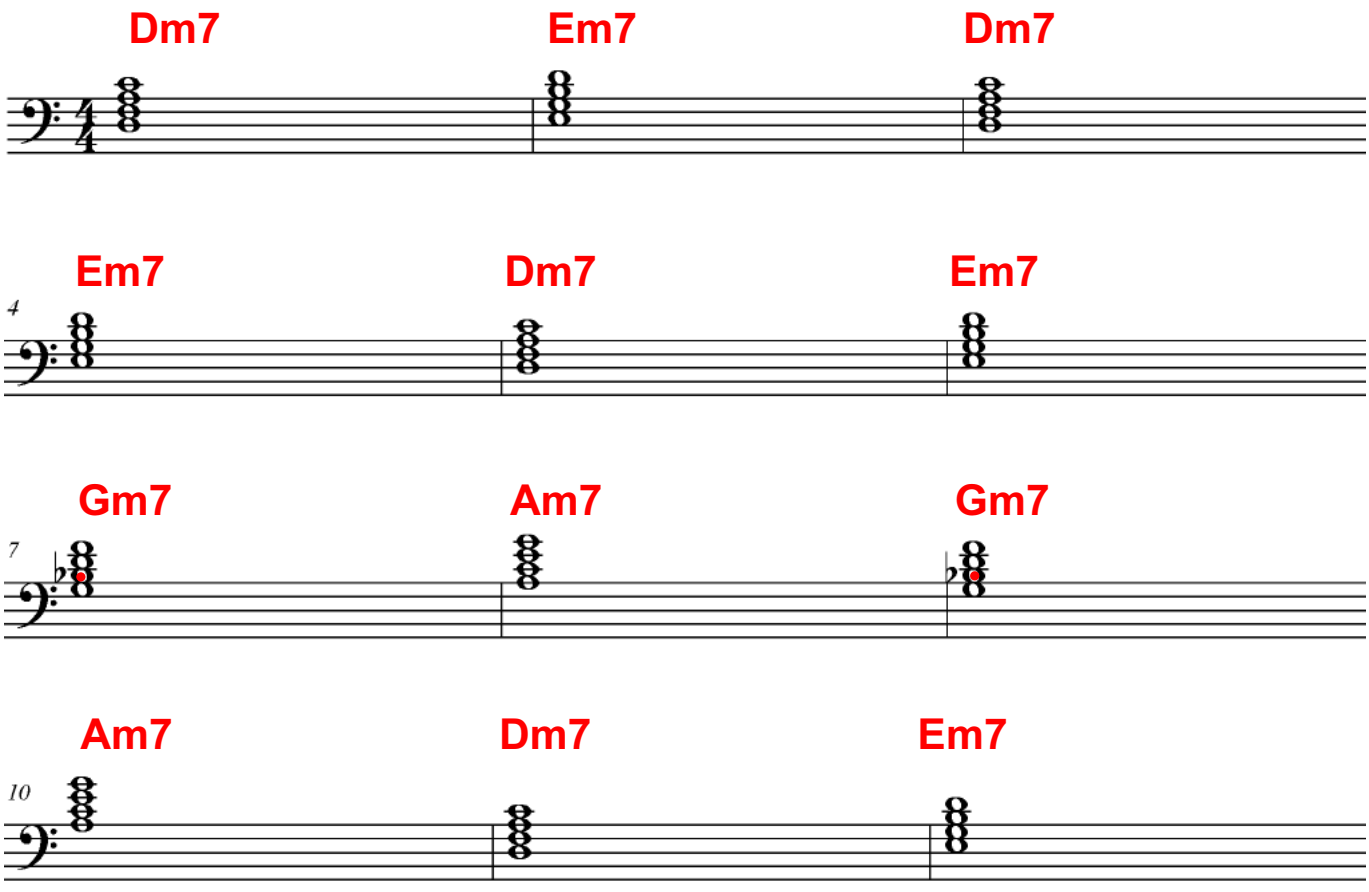
D MINOR JAZZ
CHORDAL IMPROVISATION

The problem with sticking to the BLUES SCALE is your playing sounds Bluesy not Jazzy! To create more of a Jazz flavour you need to start playing with each chord INDIVIDUALLY. This is where Jazz gets more difficult. You can't just rely on one scale anymore - now you need scales for every chord change.

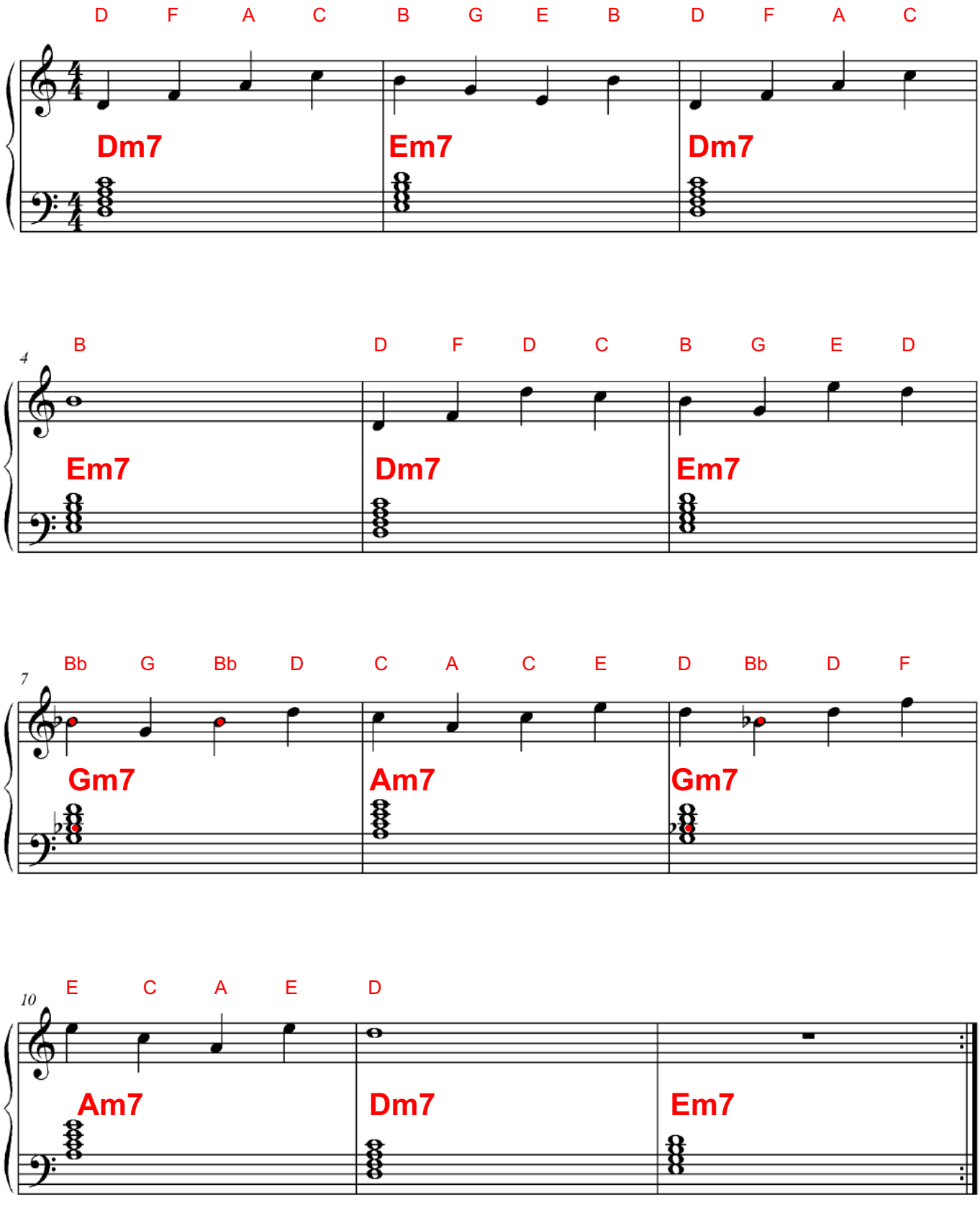
But don't panic. Take it step by step again. The easiest way to start is to use the CHORD tones in your right hand because they are easier to remember and guaranteed to sound OK. The trick is to make them sound interesting - this is where the hard work comes in.

Try your D Minor Jazz chords again but slow it WAY down. Just HOLD each chord for the 4 beats in the bar and in the RIGHT hand use the chord notes to make up some riffs. Try it yourself first then try the suggestions on the next 2 pages.

DO IT YOURSELF D MINOR JAZZ

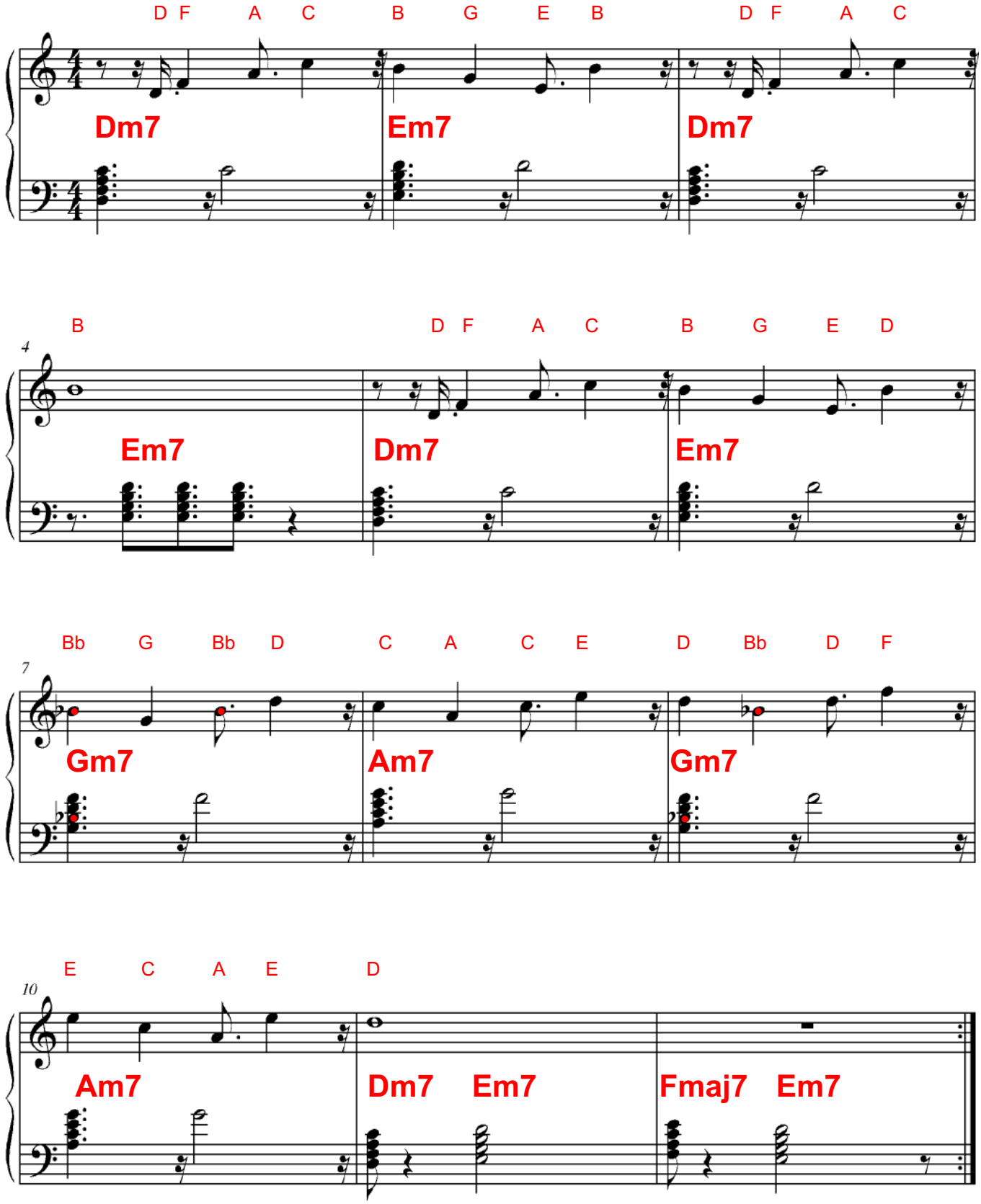


D MINOR JAZZ
CHORDAL IMPROVISATION 1



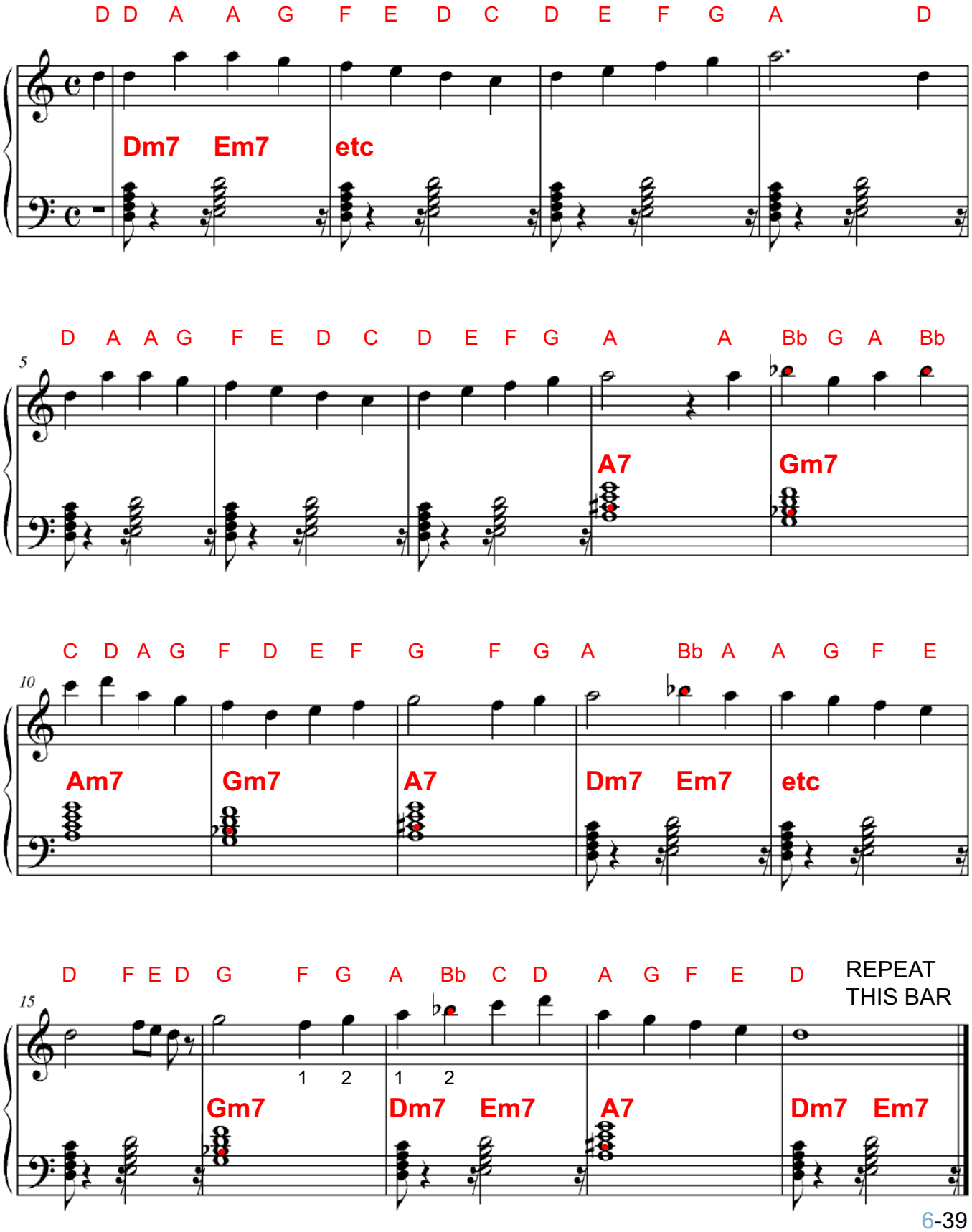
D MINOR JAZZ
CHORDAL IMPROVISATION 2

This is the previous tune ‘Jazzed-up’ a bit. Notice that you just use your thumb in the left hand for an extra mid bar beat.



D MINOR JAZZ

God Rest You Merry Gentlemen

Try your chords and the ‘SNAP and H O L D’ rhythm with this terrific tune.
There is one added chord - A7 - watch out for it.

D D A A G F E D C D E F G A D
Dm7 Em7 etc
D A A G F E D C D E F G A A Bb G A Bb
5
A7 Gm7
C D A G F D E F G F G A Bb A A G F E
10
Am7 Gm7 A7 Dm7 Em7 etc
D F E D G F G A Bb C D A G F E D
15
1 2 1 2
Gm7 Dm7 Em7 A7 Dm7 Em7
REPEAT
THIS BAR

D MINOR JAZZ
TWO HANDED COMPING

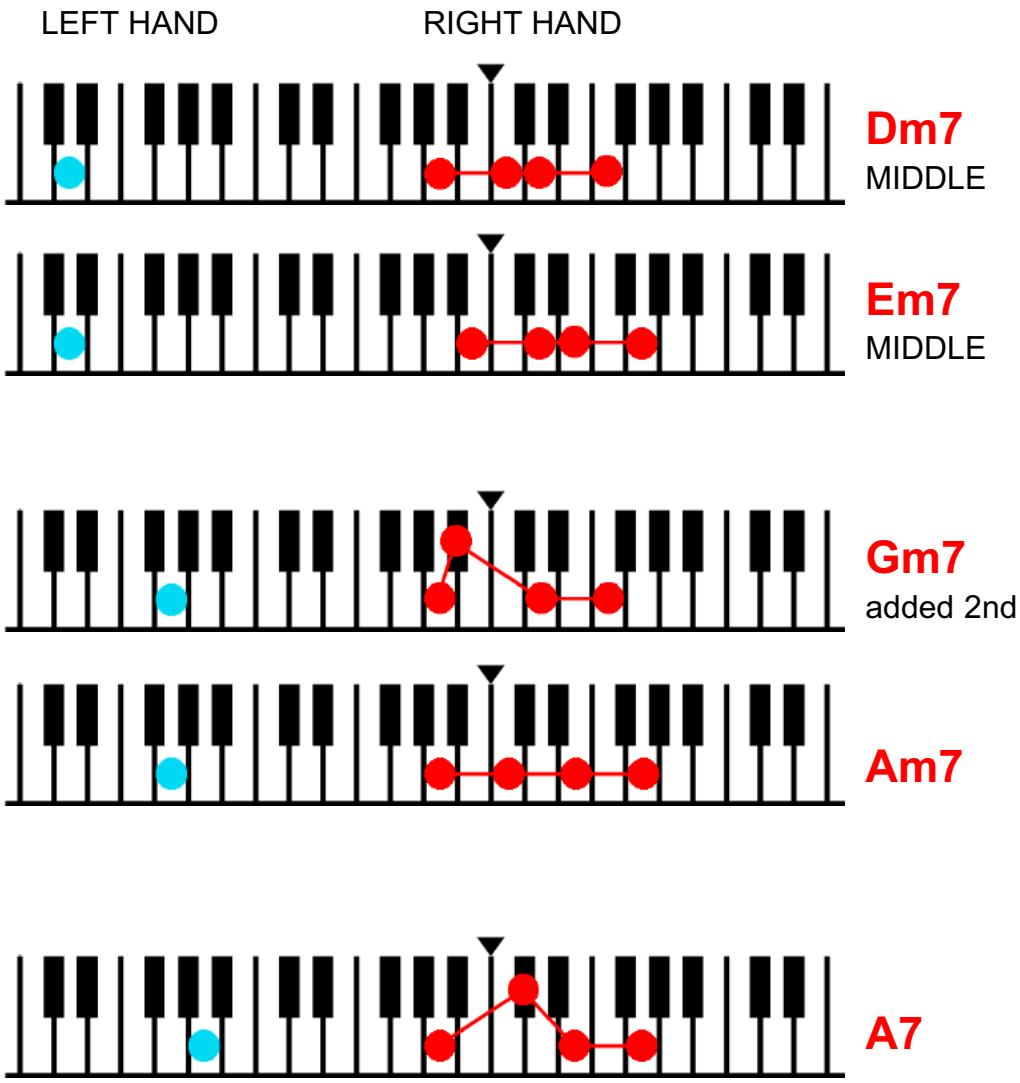
'Comping' comes from the word 'accompanying' and can refer to two things.

1. Accompanying YOURSELF - in which case you play left hand chords in your left hand and play the melody or improvise in the right hand. This is what you've been doing up to now.

2. Accompanying SOMEONE ELSE - this is where you lay down a chordal background over which another musician plays the melody or improvisation. This is what you're going to try now.

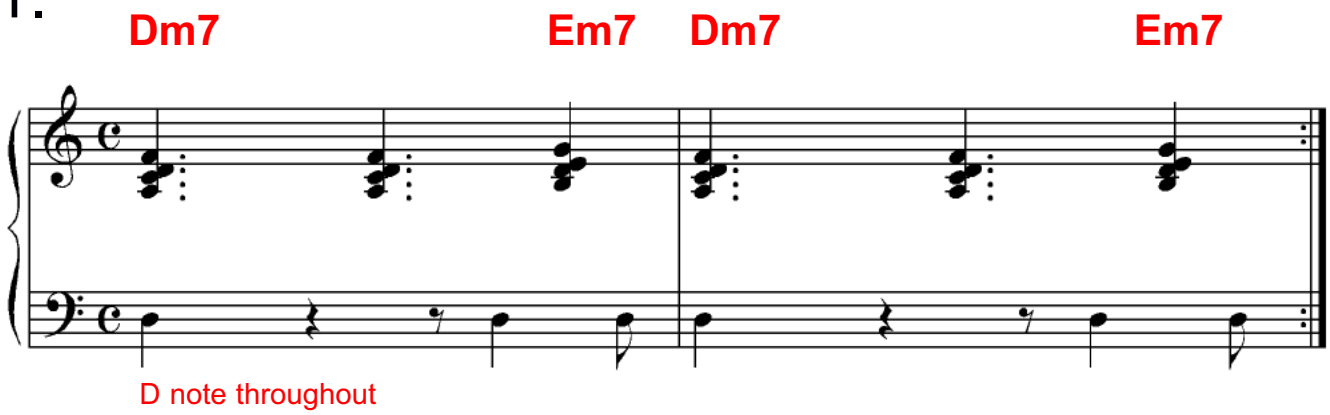
You are going to switch back to playing the 4 note chords in your RIGHT hand but keep them AROUND middle C.

First find the chords. These are inversions of the D Minor Jazz chords.

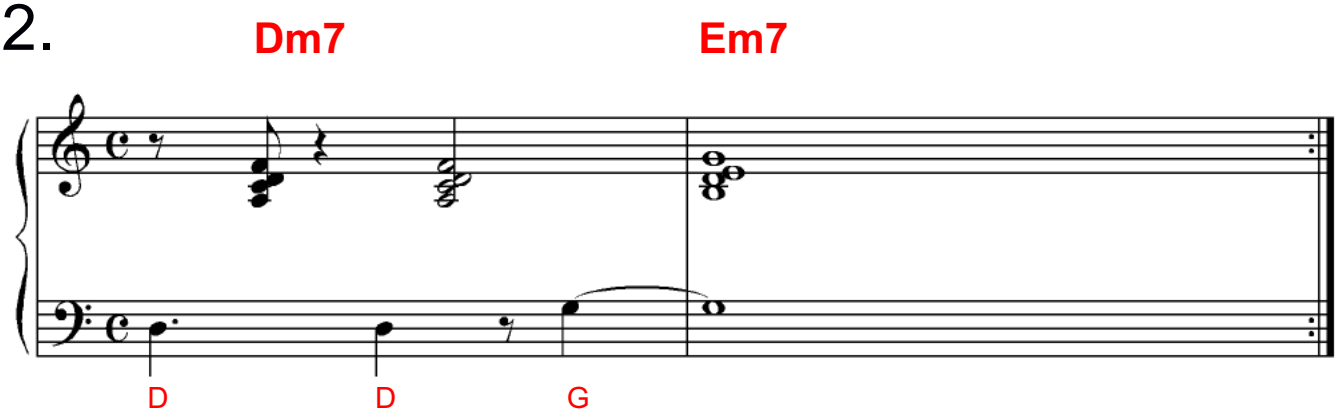


D MINOR JAZZ
TWO HANDED COMPING - RHYTHMS

1.

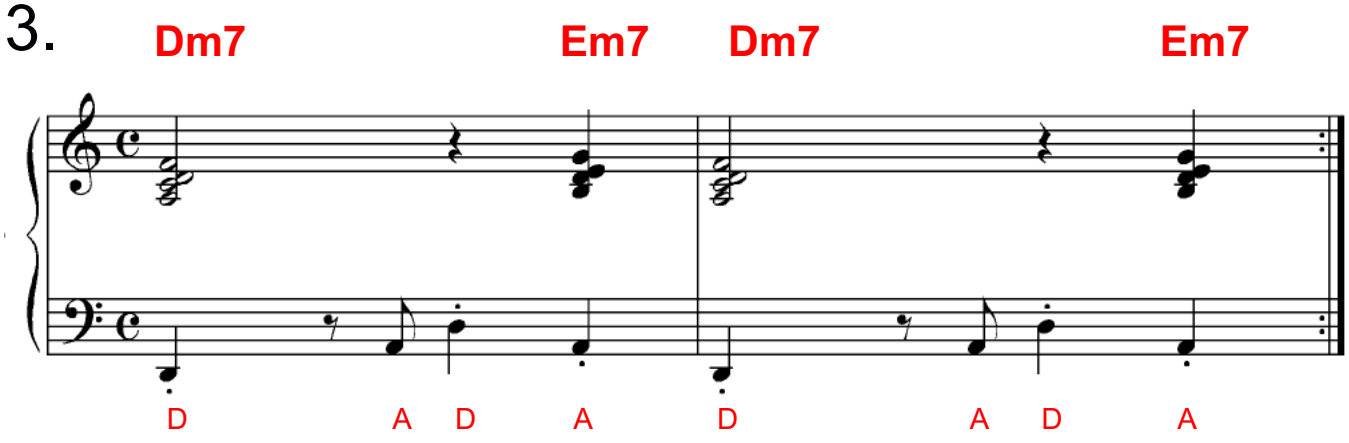


2.



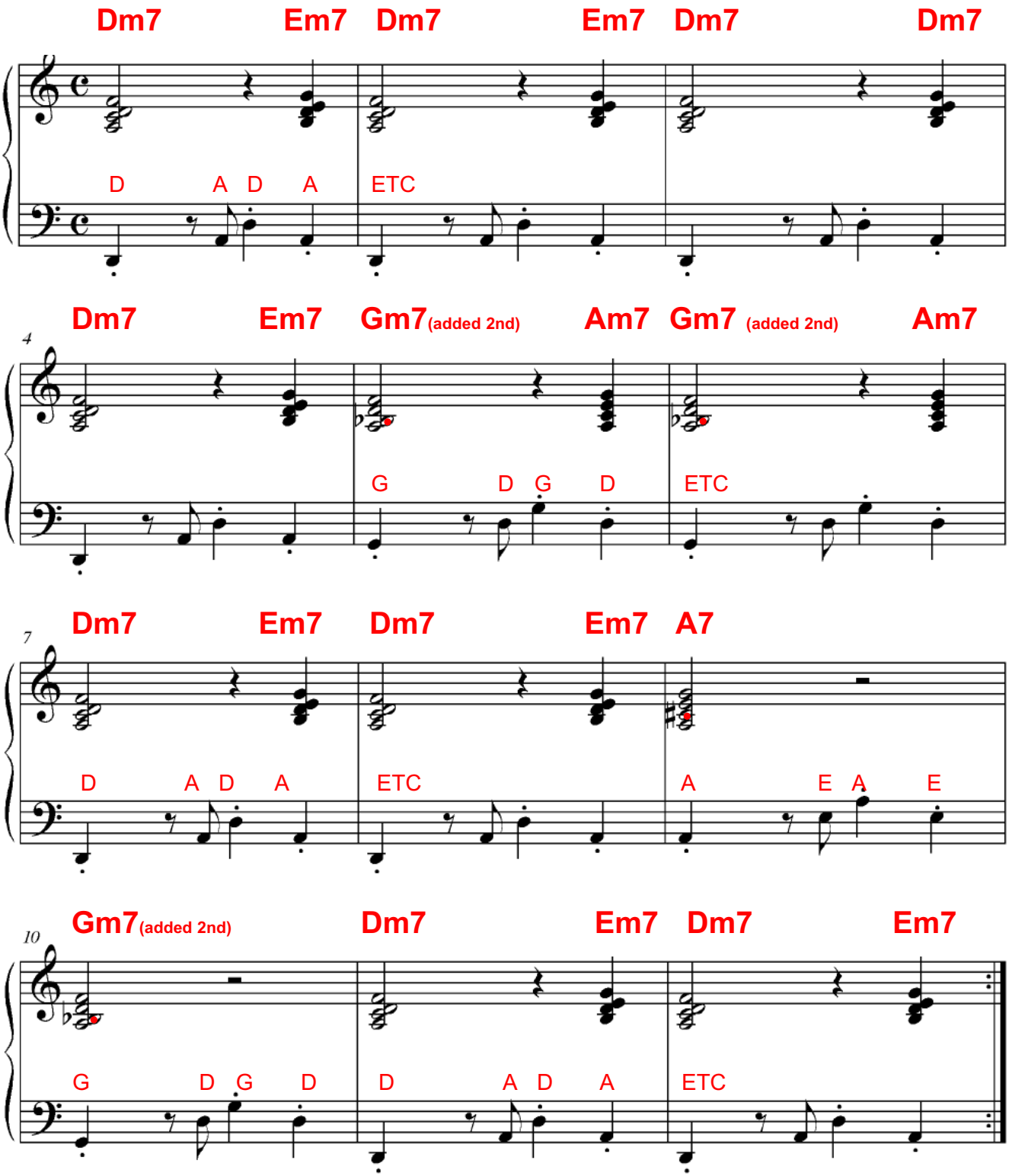
With a ‘LATIN’ swing

3.



Let’s try this last rhythm over the entire progression on the next page.

D MINOR JAZZ
TWO HANDED COMPING

A LATIN TWIST

Dm7 Em7 Dm7 Em7 Dm7 Dm7
D A D A ETC
4
Dm7 Em7 Gm7 (added 2nd) Am7 Gm7 (added 2nd) Am7
G D G D ETC
7
Dm7 Em7 Dm7 Em7 A7
D A D A ETC A E A E
10
Gm7 (added 2nd) Dm7 Em7 Dm7 Em7
G D G D D A D A ETC

When you get used to this rhythm play an improvised line instead of the chords in the right hand. This is a great way to get used to playing over a bass line.

D MINOR JAZZ
LEFT HAND STRIDE 1

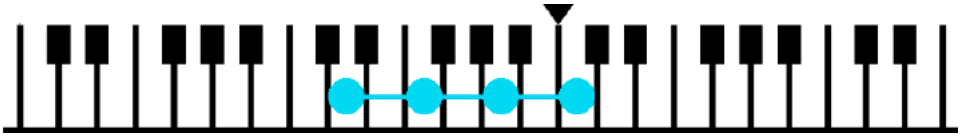
Another way to play chords in the left hand is to use a technique called STRIDE

This is where you play a bass note THEN the chord higher up the keyboard
Try it with your D MINOR JAZZ chords

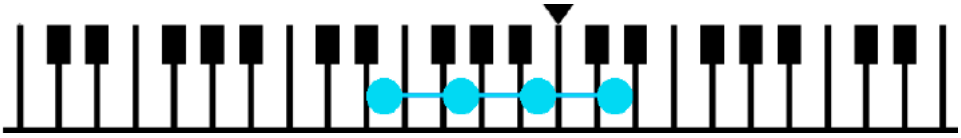
ALL LEFT HAND

Hit a low
D note

Then an
Dm7 chord

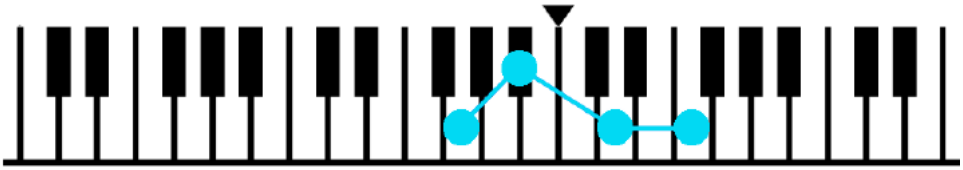


Then an
Em7 chord



Hit a low
G note

Then an
Gm7 chord



Then an
Am7 chord

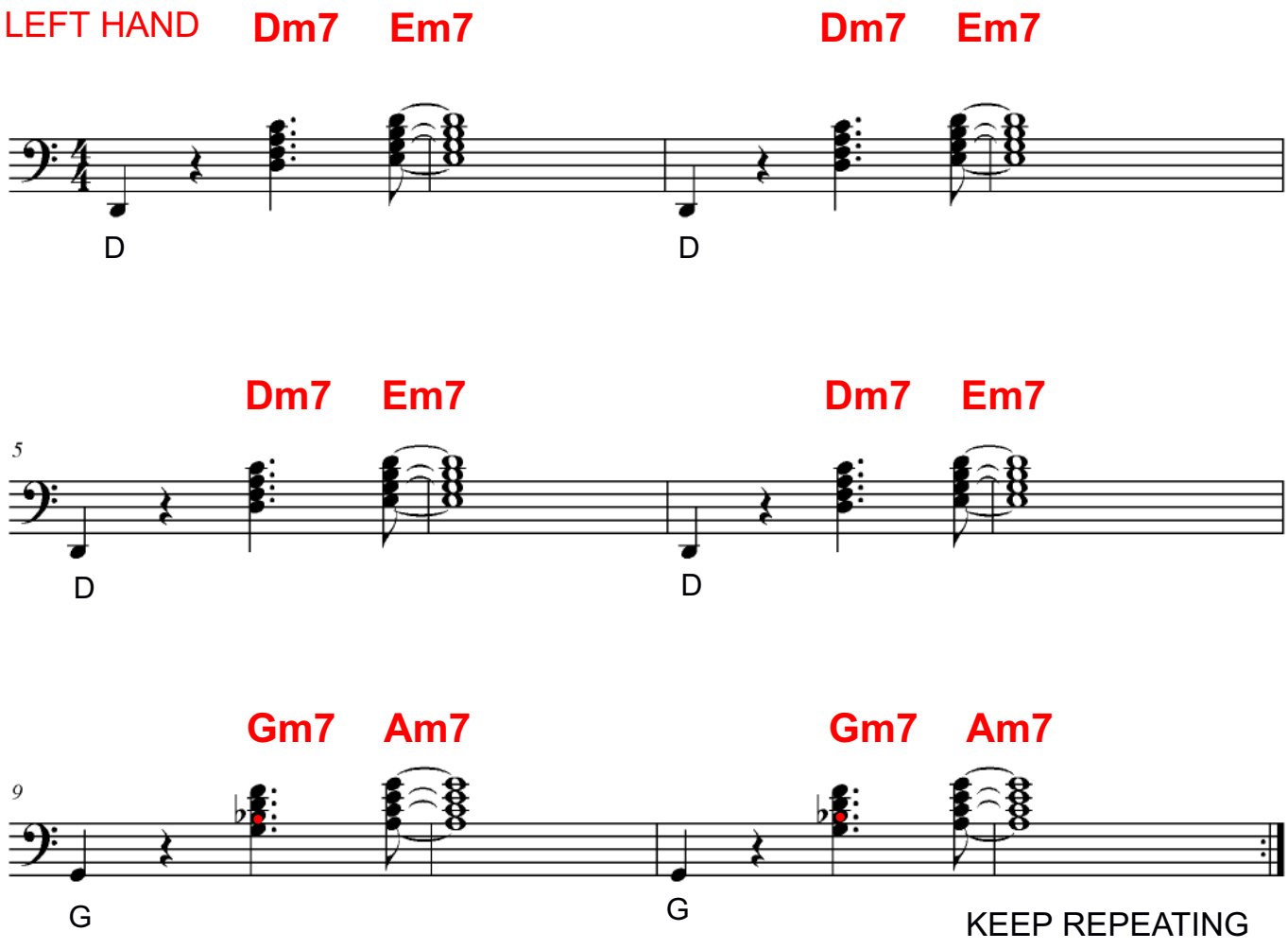
Now try the progression and rhythm on the next page

D MINOR JAZZ
LEFT HAND STRIDE 2

Listen carefully to the recording.
Play it nice and slow to give yourself plenty of time to improvise in the right hand.

Notice that even though the Em7 looks like it is played twice, it is actually played ONCE just before the end of the bar and HELD down throughout the next bar
(That's what the little curved lines mean - they are called 'ties')

D MINOR STRIDE



Now play around with the Dm7 scale (all the white keys)
and the D Blues Scale

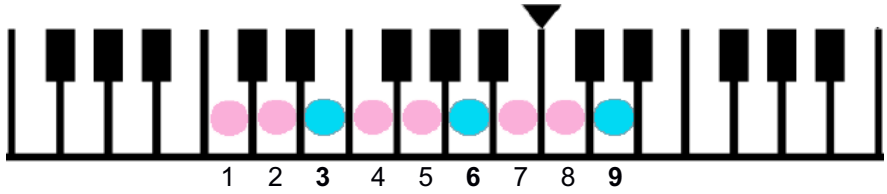
MODERN VOICINGS

QUARTAL HARMONY

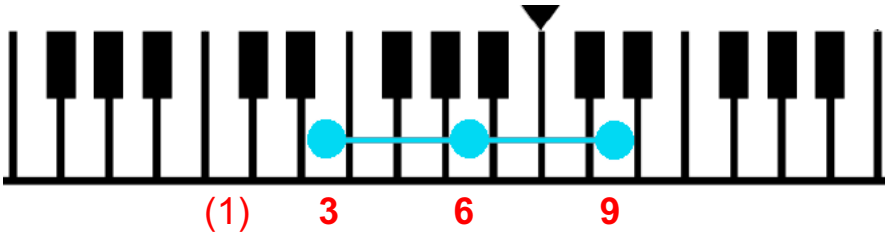
MODERN VOICINGS
QUARTAL HARMONY

If you play the **3rd**, the **6th** and the **9th** of any chord (in that order) you will see that each of the notes are a fourth apart. This is called a ‘quartal’ voicing.

Let’s look at this for Cmajor. The 3rd is E - the 6th is A - the 9th is D

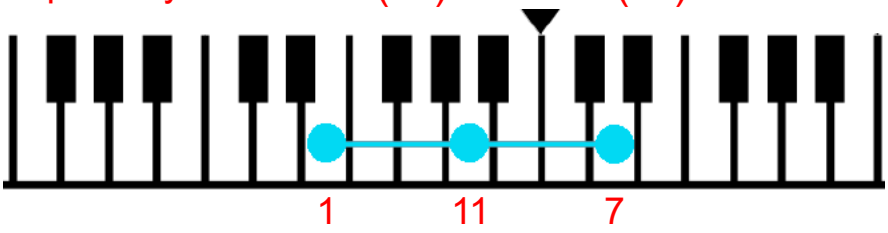


C 6/9

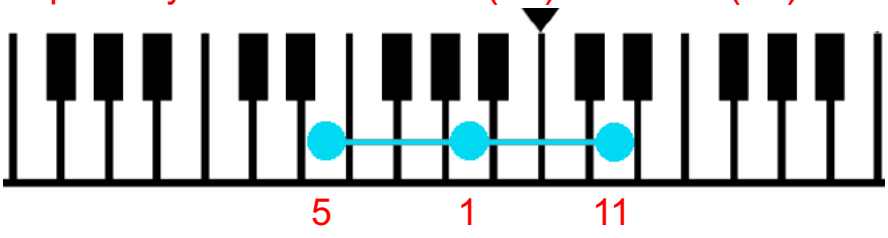


As you can hear, this chord has a very modern sound to it. They are great for beginners to improvise with because each voicing can imply many different chords which gives you more room for manoeuvre.

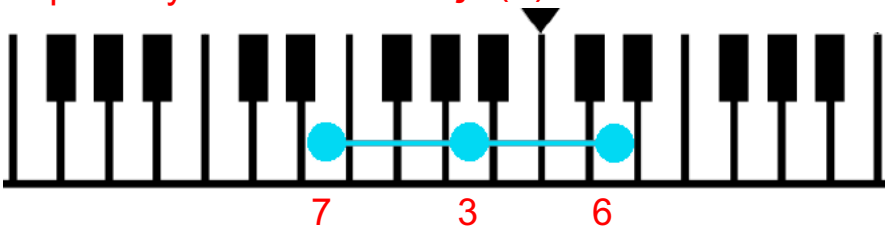
Could possibly be.. E7(11) or **Em7** (11)



Could possibly be.. A(11) or **Am7** (11)



Could possibly be.. Fmaj7(6)



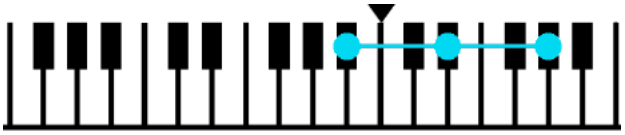
MODERN VOICINGS - QUARTAL HARMONY

Try all the 369 voicings - notice how easy they are to form. Don't worry yet about what chord they relate to - just play around with them - get a FEEL for the unique sound.

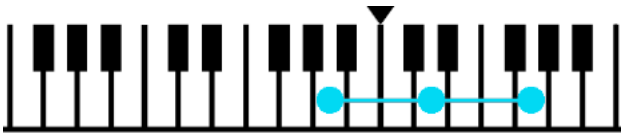
369 of **Gmaj7**

ALL **LEFT** HAND

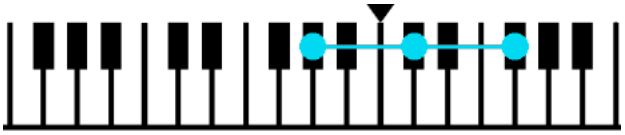
369 of **Gbmaj7**



369 of **Fmaj7**

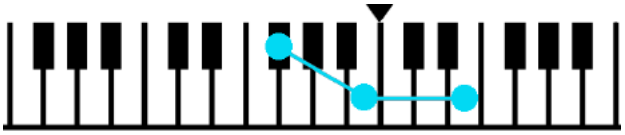


369 of **Emaj7**

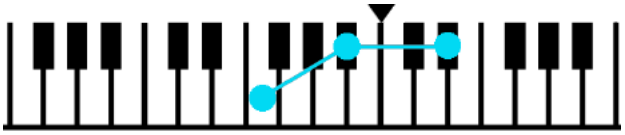


369 of **Ebmaj7**

369 of **Dmaj7**

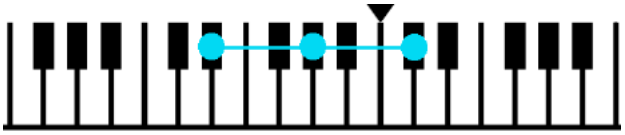


369 of **Dbmaj7**



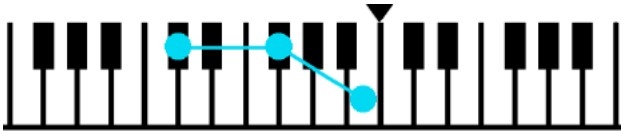
369 of **Cmaj7**

369 of **Bmaj7**

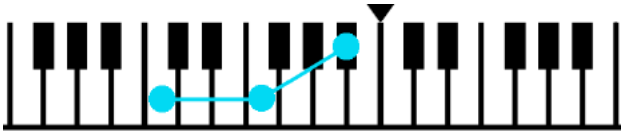


369 of **Bbmaj7**

369 of **Amaj7**



369 of **Abmaj7**



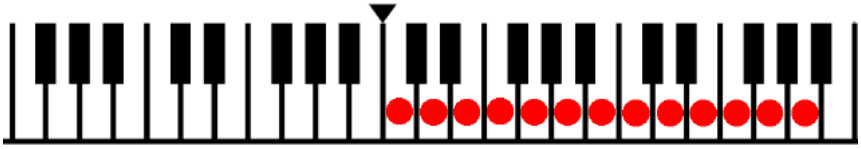
QUARTAL HARMONY
FREESTYLE IMPROVISING

Lets try improvising over some QUARTAL voicings.

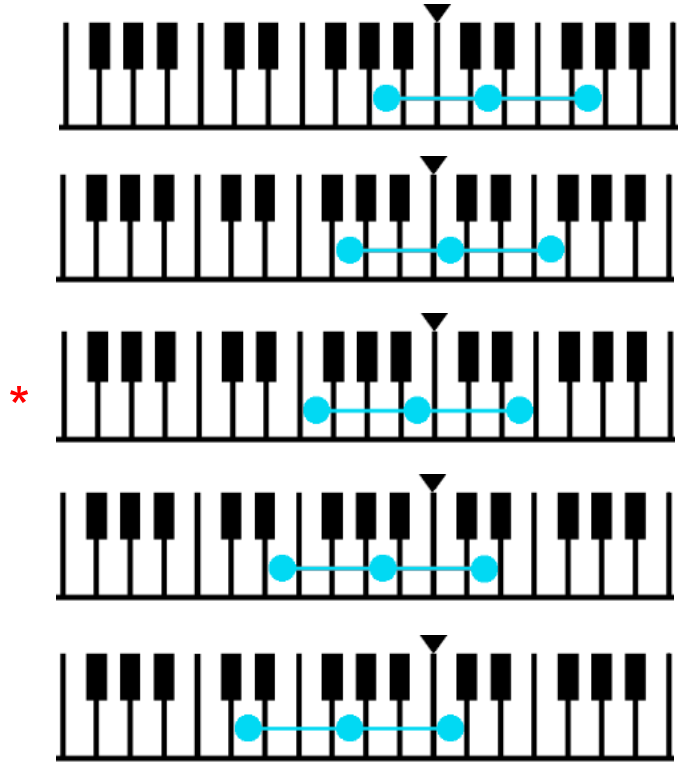
As I said before - Quartal voicings can IMPLY other chords so if you just play all the WHITE key quartal voicings and improvise in your right hand with ANY white key you can play around for ages and it will all sound harmonically correct. This gives you the chance to experiment with runs patterns and rhythm etc without getting hung up on having to play exact notes. Have fun!

TIP: Because the left hand chords are very ‘open’ harmonically, you can create interesting ideas in the right hand by playing notes that are quite far apart.
You can mirror the left hand intervals and play lots of fourths. Don’t be afraid to move all over the keyboard.

RIGHT HAND - Any white key



LEFT HAND

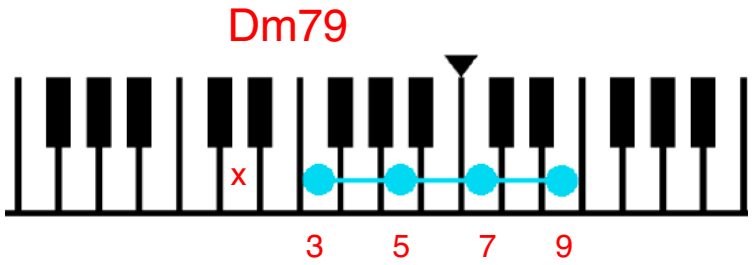


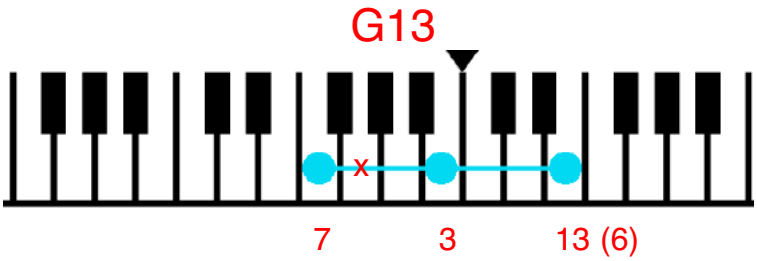
* The voicing that starts on F isn’t actually a proper quartal voicing because F isn’t a 'perfect' fourth away from B. This voicing is the 7th, 3rd and 6th of G which still fits in with the overall harmony

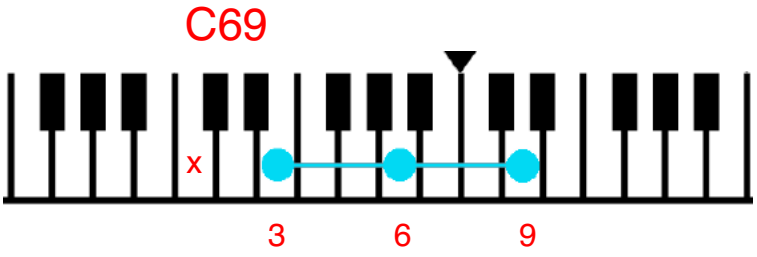
QUARTAL HARMONY
A FREQUENTLY USED FORMULA

Let's look at how some of these voicings might fit into a modern tune.

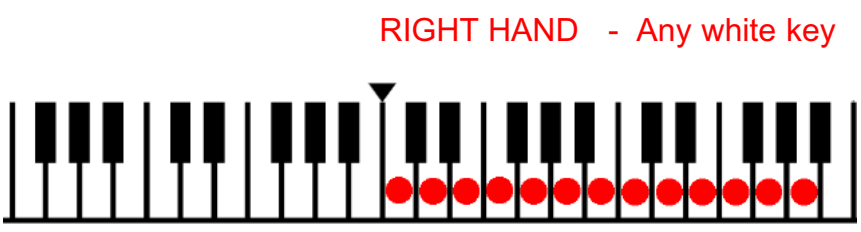
Try this frequently used three chord II - V - I progression - often used at the end of a tune







IMPROVISE in the right hand using a C MAJOR scale



MODERN VOICINGS

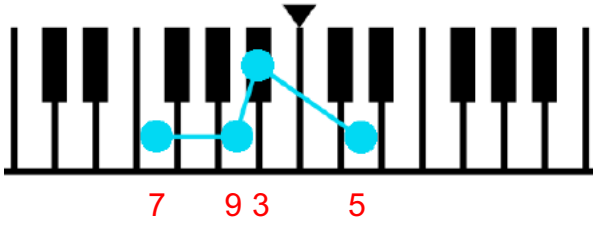
Instant Bill Evans - Chordal ‘fragments’

Bill Evans made great use of Quartal voicings and chordal ‘fragments’.

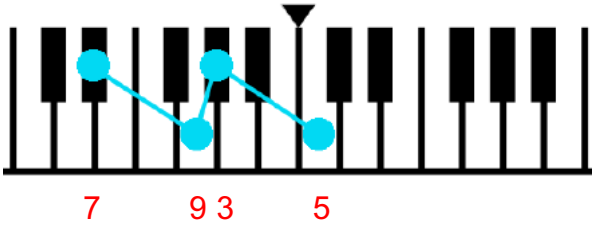
A chordal fragment is when you simplify a four note chord down to three notes and ‘cluster’ two of the notes together.

First try the following four note minor ninth chords.
You are playing the 7th, 9th, 3rd and 5th - leaving out the Root

Gm9

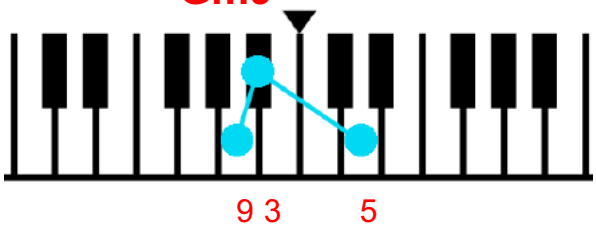


Fm9

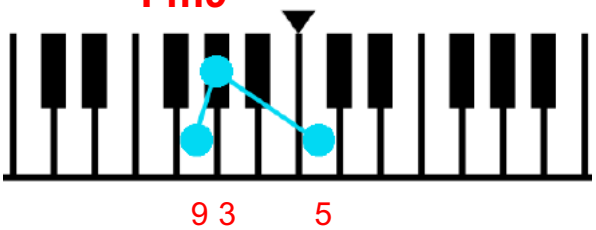


Now leave out the bottom note - the 7th -
This leaves you a 935 **chordal ‘fragment**’ - the 9 and 3 are ‘clustered’ together.

Gm9

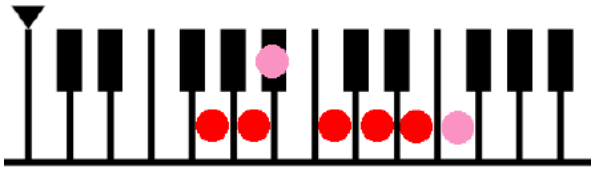


Fm9



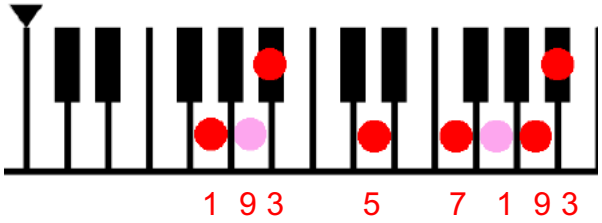
IMPROVISE in the right hand with either minor 9 chord tones or m7 scales.
Again this voicing lends itself to wider intervals in the right hand. imagine you are playing a vibraphone

Gm7 scale

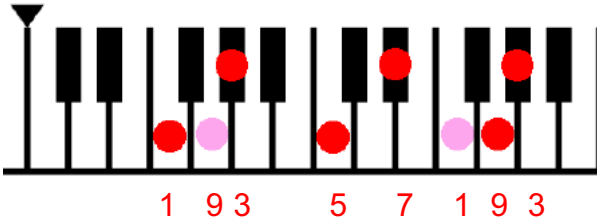


Fm7 scale

Gm9 chord tones



Fm9 chord tones



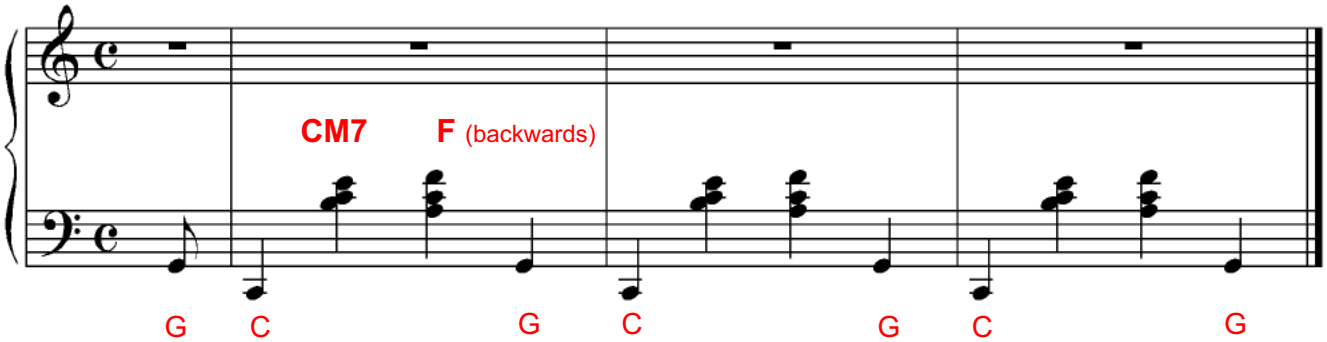
MODERN VOICINGS

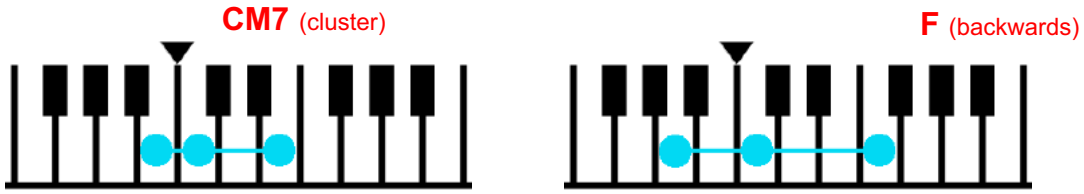
Instant Bill Evans - ‘Peace Piece’

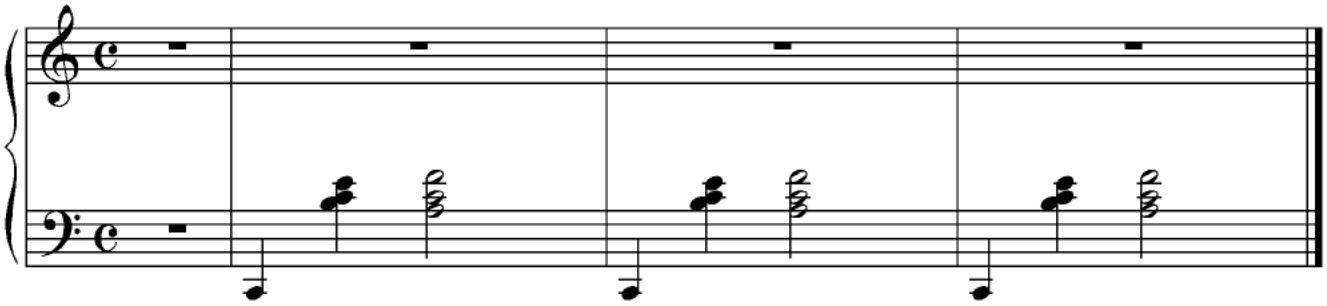
One of Bill Evans compositions is a must for beginners to check out. It’s called ‘Peace Piece’ and the ENTIRE tune uses the same left hand riff in EVERY bar!

If you download the score at www.musicdirect.com you can then try to work out some of the patterns in the right hand. Or just make up your own - play ANY white key.

Here’s the Left Hand Riff



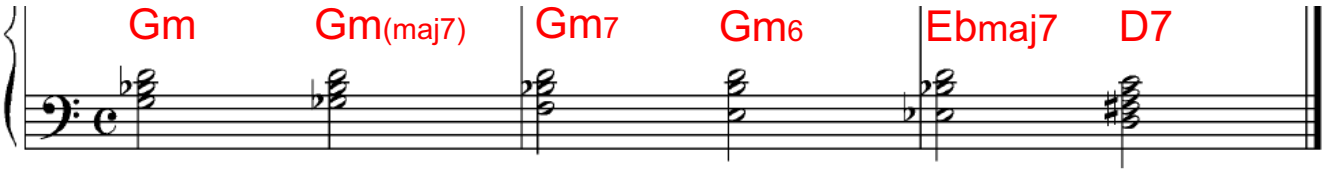
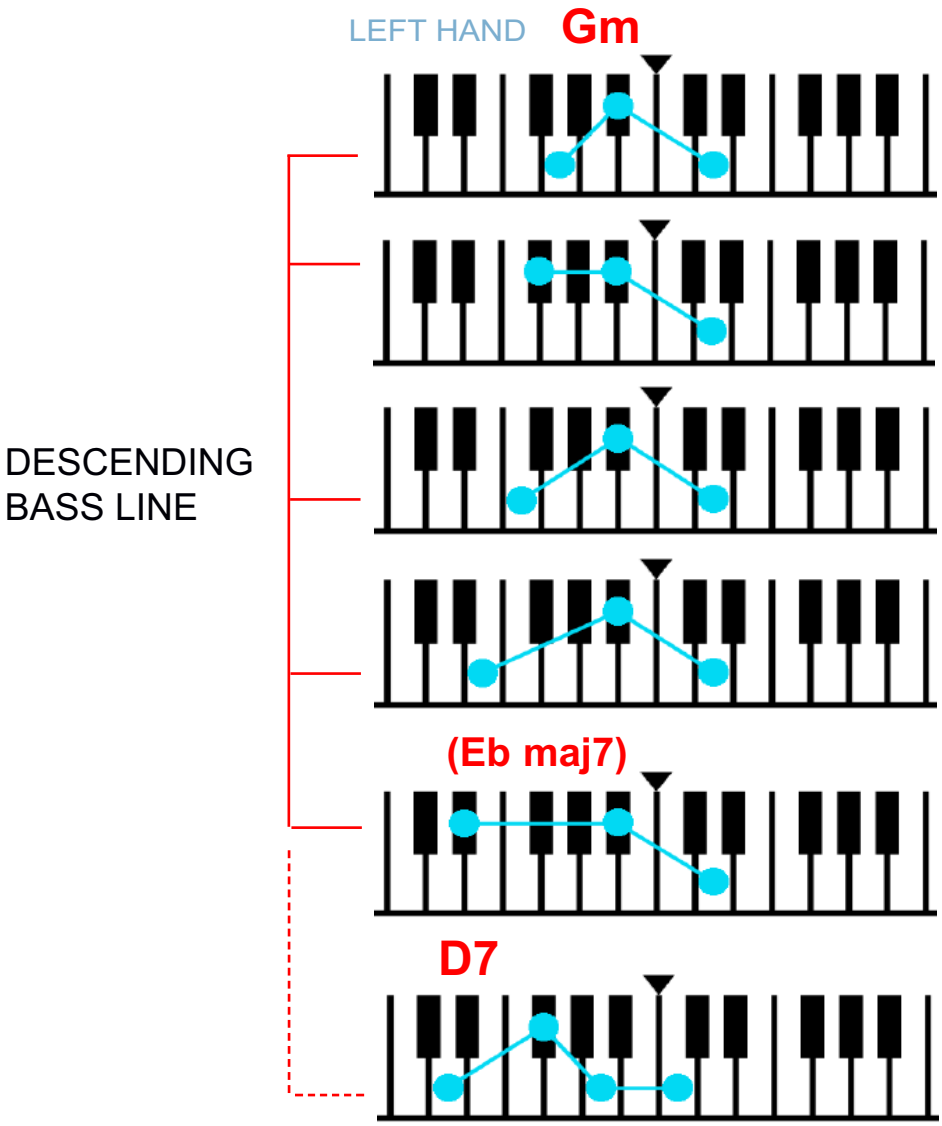


To make it even easier you could leave out the fourth beat in each bar

Remember - IMPROVISE in the right hand using ANY white key. Download the music and try to figure out what he actually played.

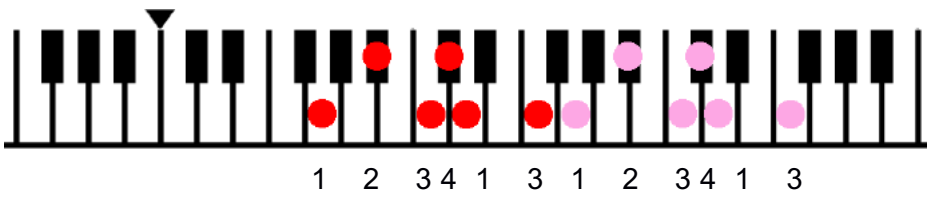
ODDS AND ENDS

DESCENDING BASE LINE

My Funny Valentine / Masquerade

A common technique used to create interest in slow songs is a descending bass line. Basically the root moves down in semitones. Try the following sequence..



In your right hand play the melody for 'My Funny Valentine' or 'Masquerade' by George Benson. This device is also used in 'Michelle' by The Beatles.
Or you could IMPROVISE using the **G BLUES scale**.



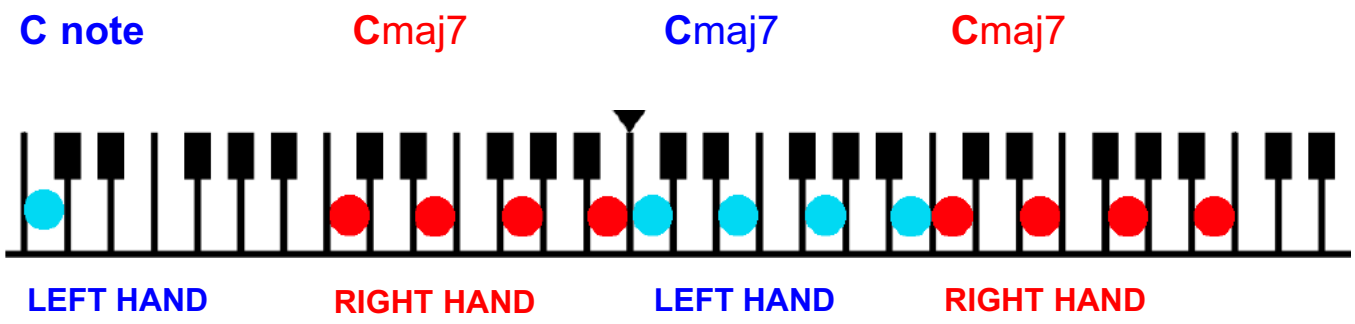
FOUR NOTE FLOURISH - 7th chords

Remember the tune you played (in book 1) where you did a run up the piano using one 3 note ‘broken chord’ pattern.

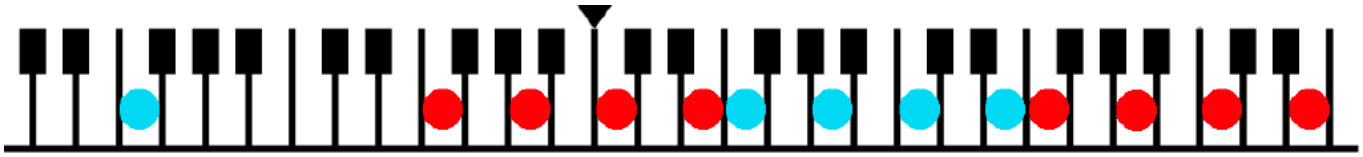
You can also easily do this with your 4 note chords.

Try it now with the 4 note chord of Cmaj7 - remember - play one note at a time from the low C note to the high B note.

Keep the sustain pedal down throughout



Now transpose the sequence to the chord of Fmaj7



Continue transposing the sequence over the following chord progression

ALL WHITE KEYS

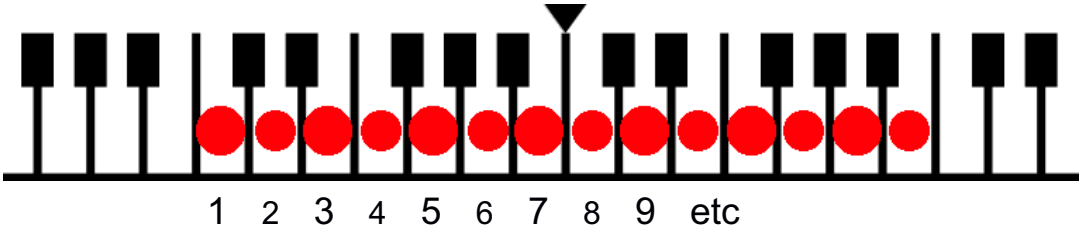
Cmaj7 - Fmaj7 - B^{o}7 - Em7 - Am7 - Dm7 - Gmaj7 - Cmaj7

FOUR NOTE FLOURISH
Extended chords (9ths)

Another way you can play the 4 note flourish is to make use of 9th chords.

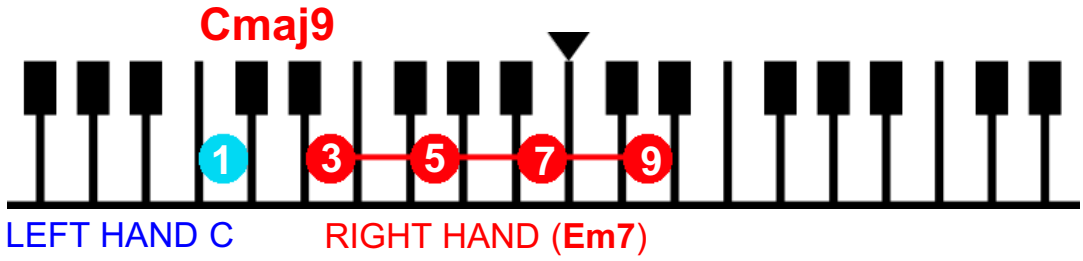
Let's look again at where the numbers of the chords come from

SCALE OF Cmajor - two octaves

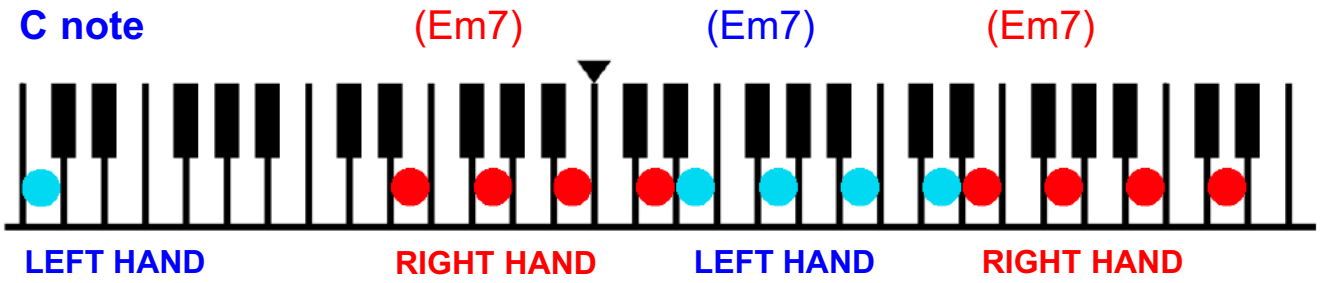


You will notice that the 3rd, 5th, 7th and 9th make up the chord of **Em7**

So if you played a BASS note of C in the LEFT HAND and a RIGHT hand chord of Em7 you would be playing the extended chord Cmajor9. A lovely sound!



Try another 4 note flourish but this time make use of extended chords.
First of all try **Cmaj9**



Experiment further with the following EXTENDED chords (ALL WHITE KEYS)

Am9 = A note LEFT hand - Cmaj7 chord RIGHT hand
Fmaj9 = F note LEFT hand - Am7 chord RIGHT hand
Dm9 = D note LEFT hand - Fmaj7 chord RIGHT hand
Cmaj9 = C note LEFT hand - Em7 chord RIGHT hand

STRIDIN' ALONG In Cmaj9

Let's play some more stride piano and put these EXTENDED chords to use. Work out the chords first

The first chords are based in the key of **C MAJOR**

Hit a low **C** note

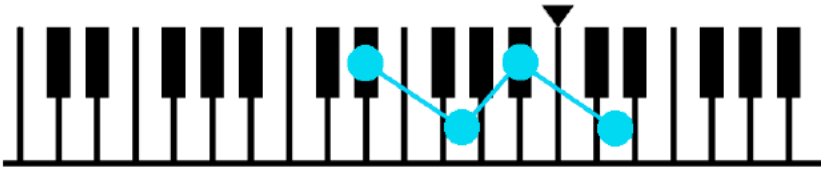
Then an **Em7** chord

Then an **Fmaj7** chord

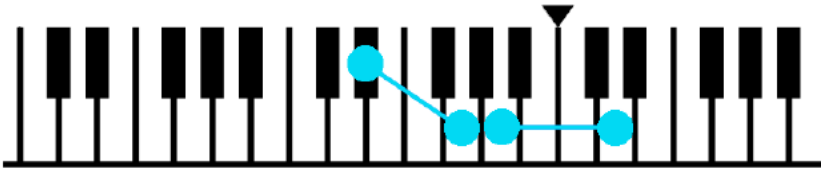
The second chords are based in the key of **C MINOR**

Hit a low **C** note

Then an **EbM7** chord



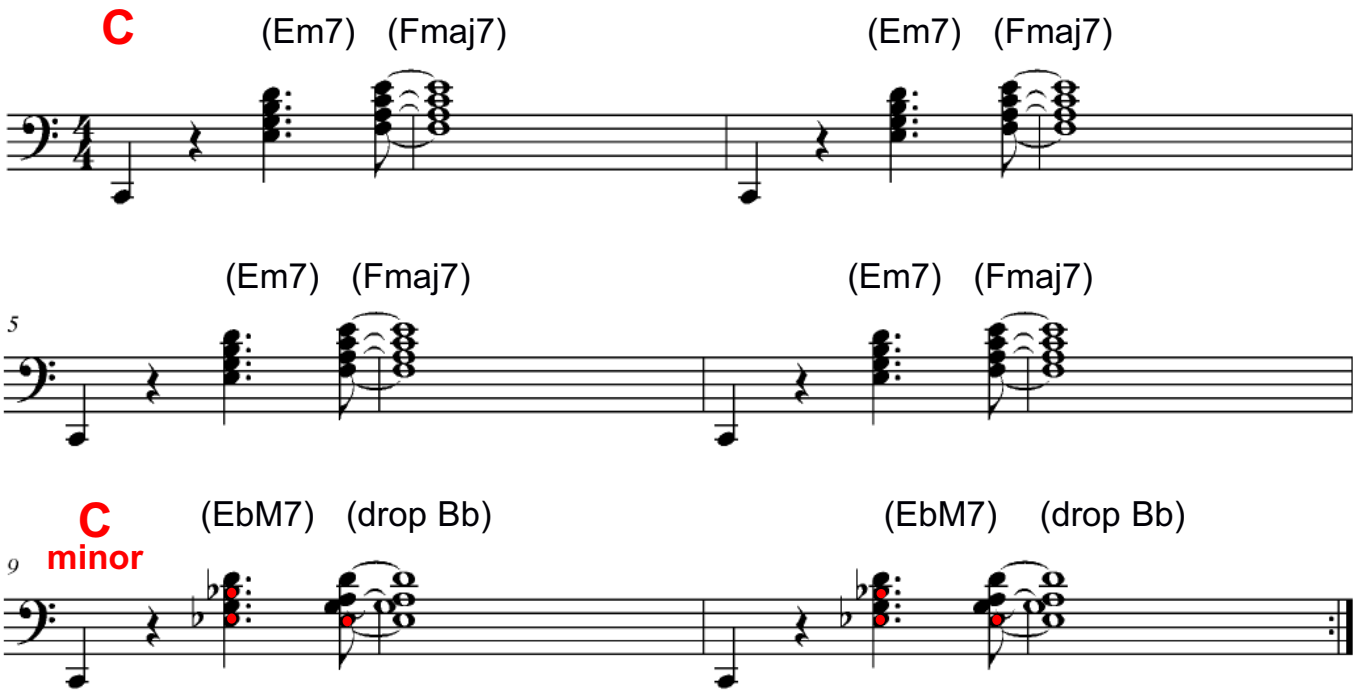
Then drop the Bb onto the A key



Now try the progression (and rhythm) on the next page.

STRIDIN' ALONG In Cmaj9

LEFT HAND



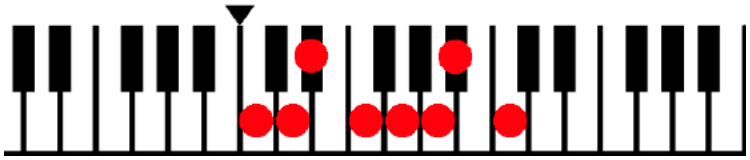
TO IMPROVISE

In the RIGHT HAND use the scale of C major (ANY white key) for the first 8 bars

C Major (ANY white key)

When you change to C minor use the following scale Cm7

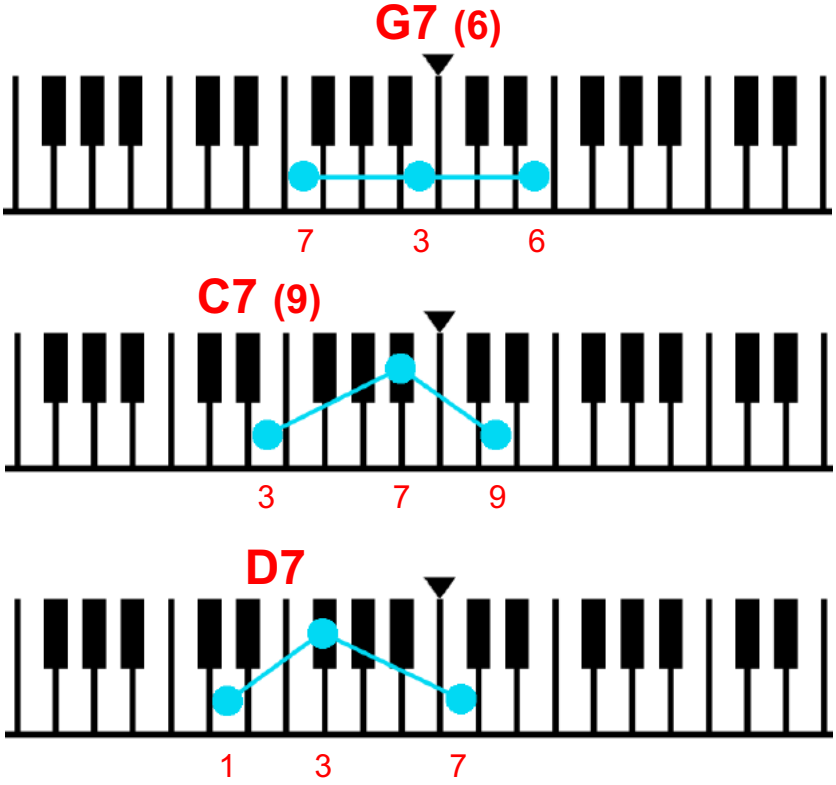
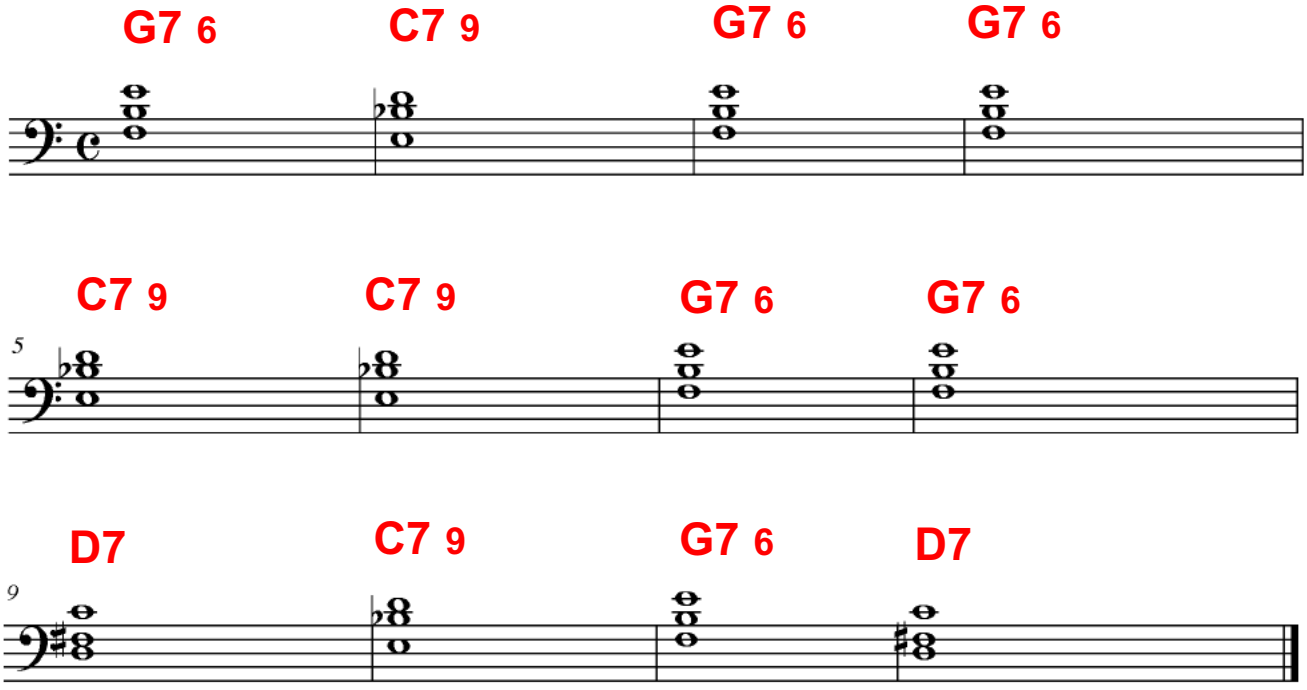
C minor7 SCALE



JAZZIN'
THE BLUES IN G

JAZZIN THE BLUES IN G
LEFT HAND CHORDS

G is another good key to practice some jazzy blues. Play these left hand chords in the following 12 bar blues progression.



6- 58.2

You could also try a STRIDE with the above - just play the relevant bass note an octave below the chord before you play the chord itself.

JAZZIN THE BLUES IN G

THE G BLUES SCALE (RIGHT HAND)

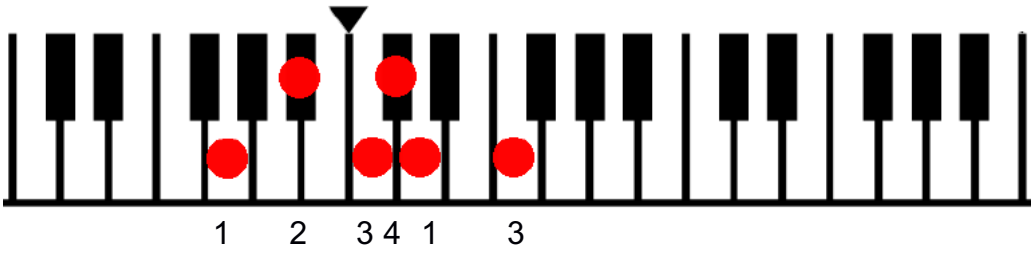
Remember how to construct a BLUES SCALE

Use the 4 notes of the MINOR SEVENTH (In Gm7 they are G - Bb - D - F)

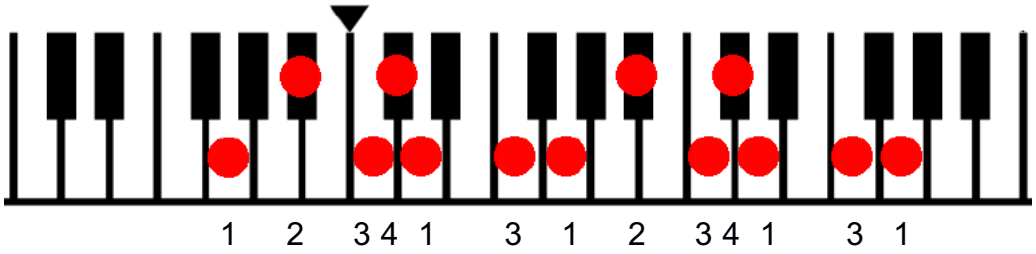
And add the 4th and the flattened 5th (In G these are C - Db)

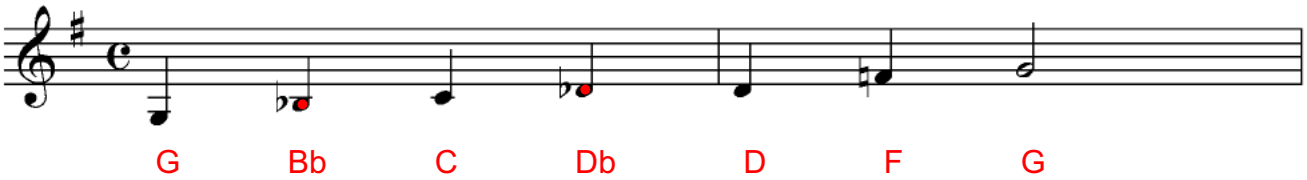
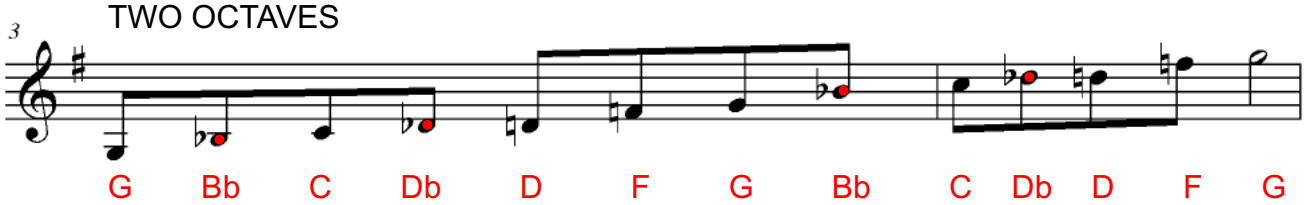
THE G BLUES SCALE

ONE OCTAVE



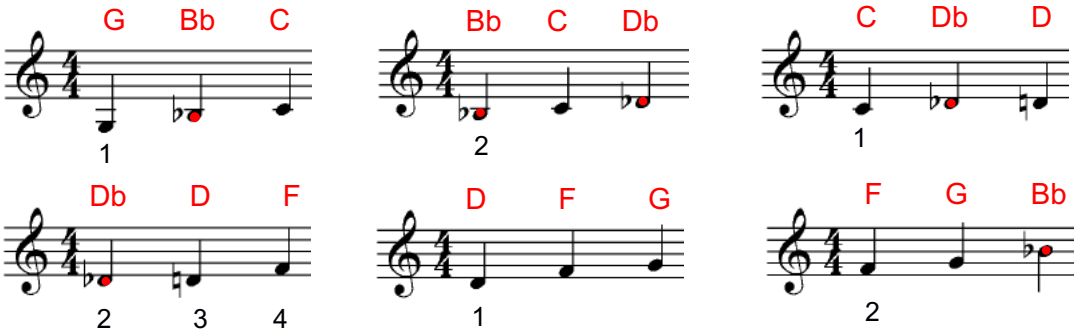
TWO OCTAVES

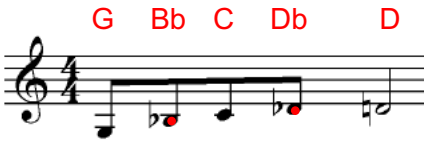
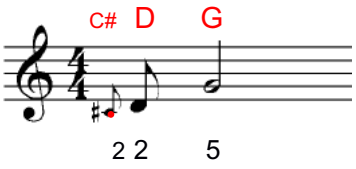


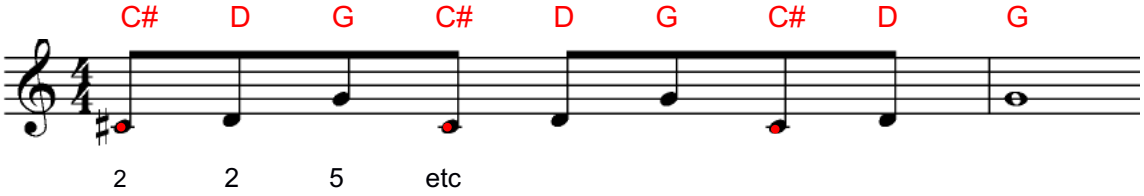
ONE OCTAVE

TWO OCTAVES

G BLUES SCALE RIFFS TO IMPROVISE WITH

(Practice these higher up the keys as well)

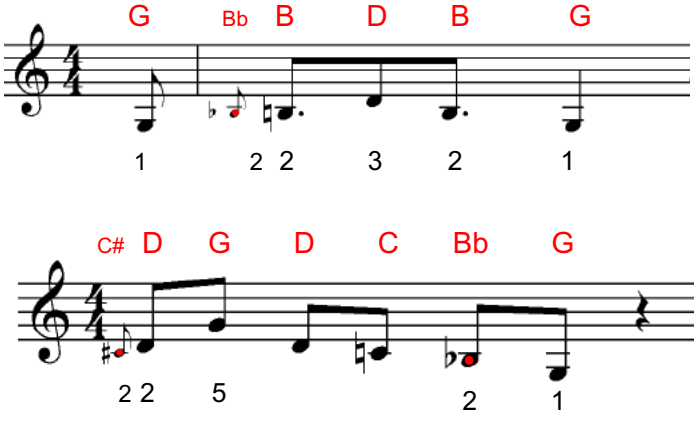
These three note patterns are taken from the BLUES SCALE - experiment with them



This is a five finger position for the scale

This is a ‘SLIDE’ - very often you SLIDE onto the white key from the flat of the key

This sounds similar but stretches the sound out. Variety is good
Notice that the sharp # in front of the first C makes them ALL sharp in that bar.



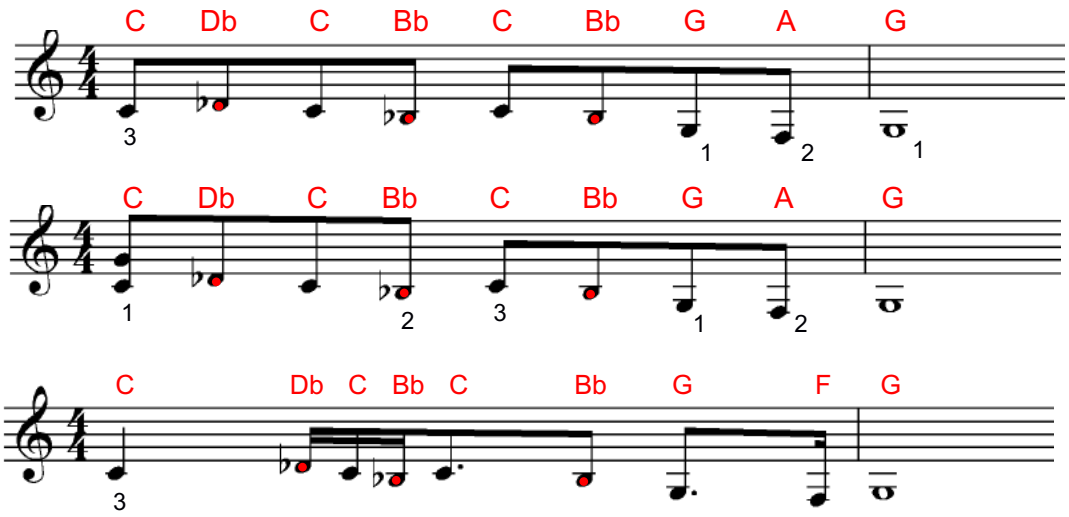
I call this the ‘Bonnie & Clyde’ Riff. It always reminds me of the song.



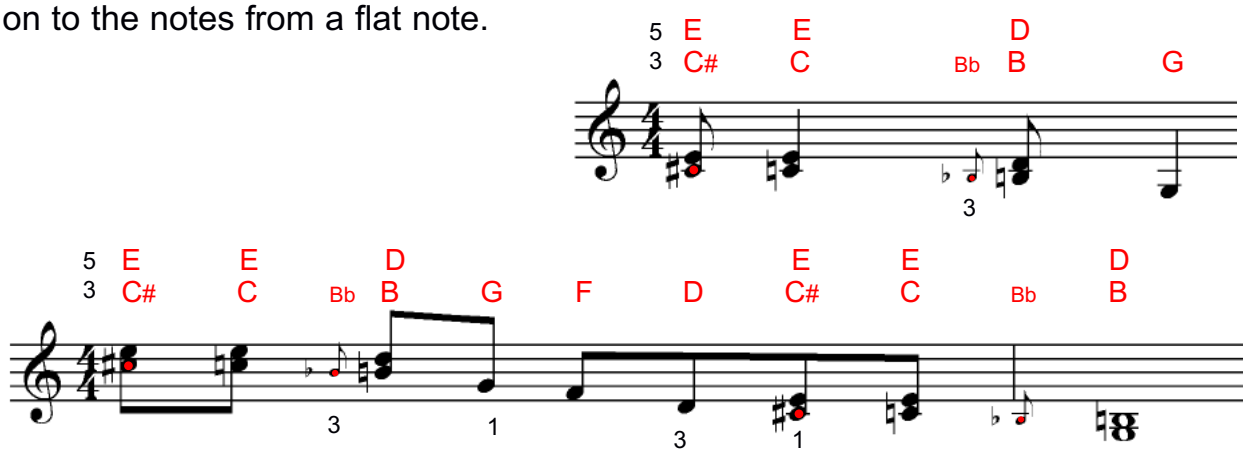
G BLUES SCALE RIFFS TO PRACTICE WITH

(Practice these higher up the keys as well)

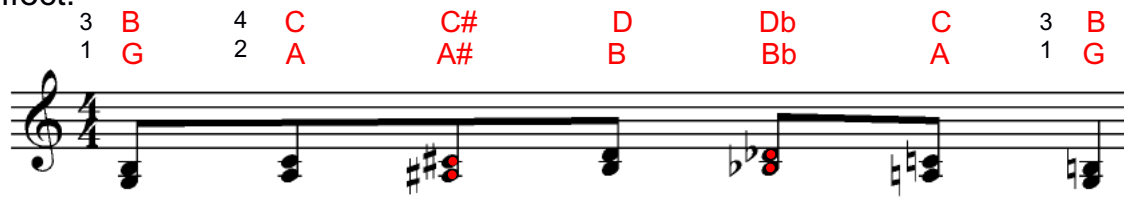
The following 3 patterns are nearly the same. The second riff has just got an added G note on TOP of the first note. This is a common blues trick. In the third riff the 2nd to 5th notes are played very quickly which is a riff in itself. LISTEN to the recording!

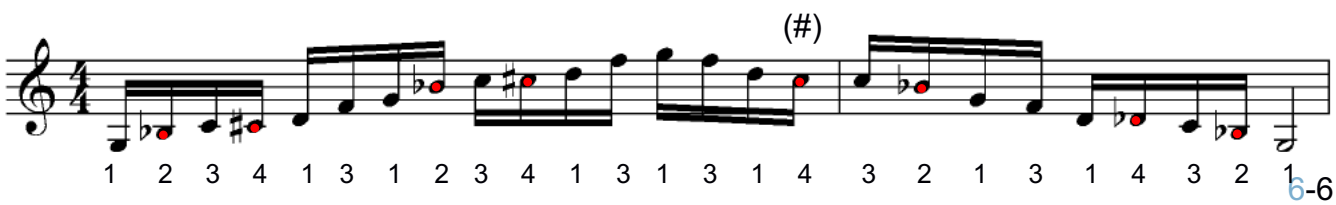


Blues riffs very often use ‘double’ notes - this gives an extra ‘ring’ and you often SLIDE on to the notes from a flat note.



You will have heard the following riff a million times. Try transposing it to C and D for better effect.



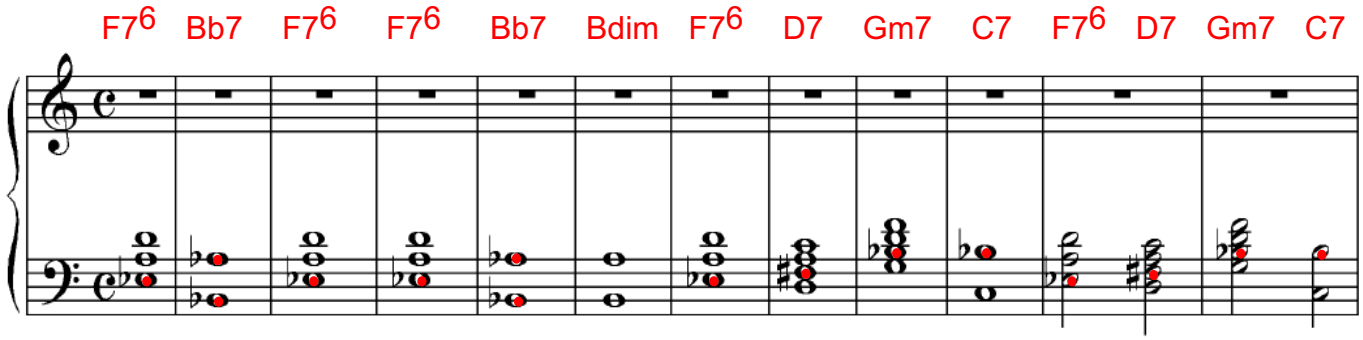
This is the BLUES SCALE over two octaves up and down.
The trick is getting the fingering right. Sounds great though doesn’t it?

TRADITIONAL

JAZZ / BLUES IN F

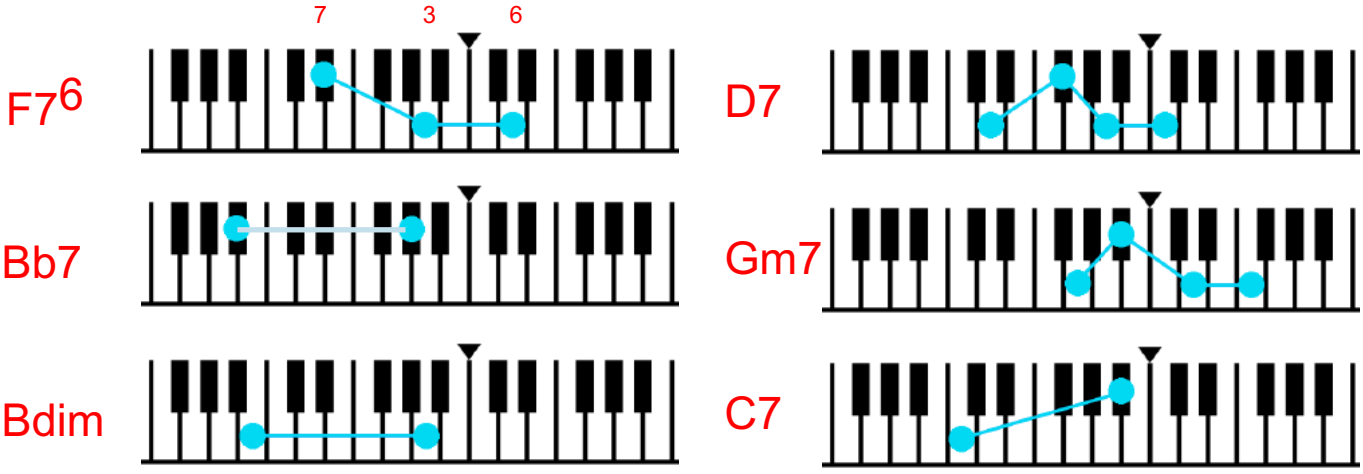
TRADITIONAL JAZZ / BLUES

Traditional Jazz used more obvious chord progressions than you might hear nowadays. It began by expanding on the 12 bar blues progression - adding in more chords to make the sound more interesting.

Try the following traditional blues / jazz progression in the key of F

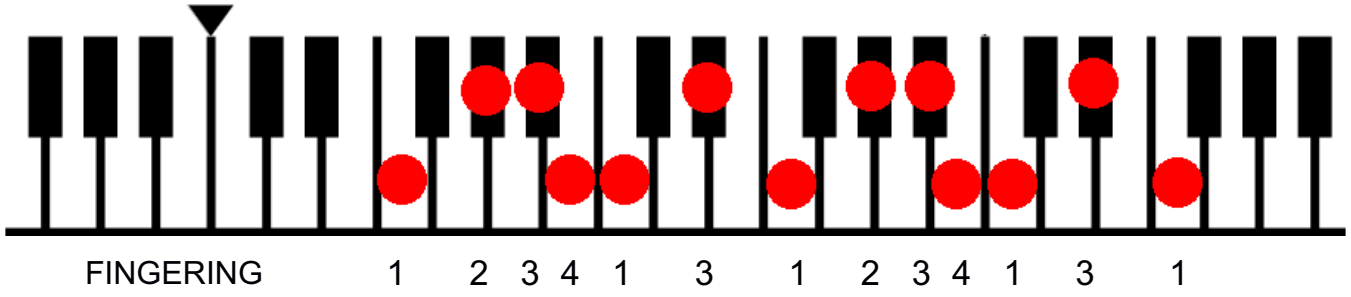


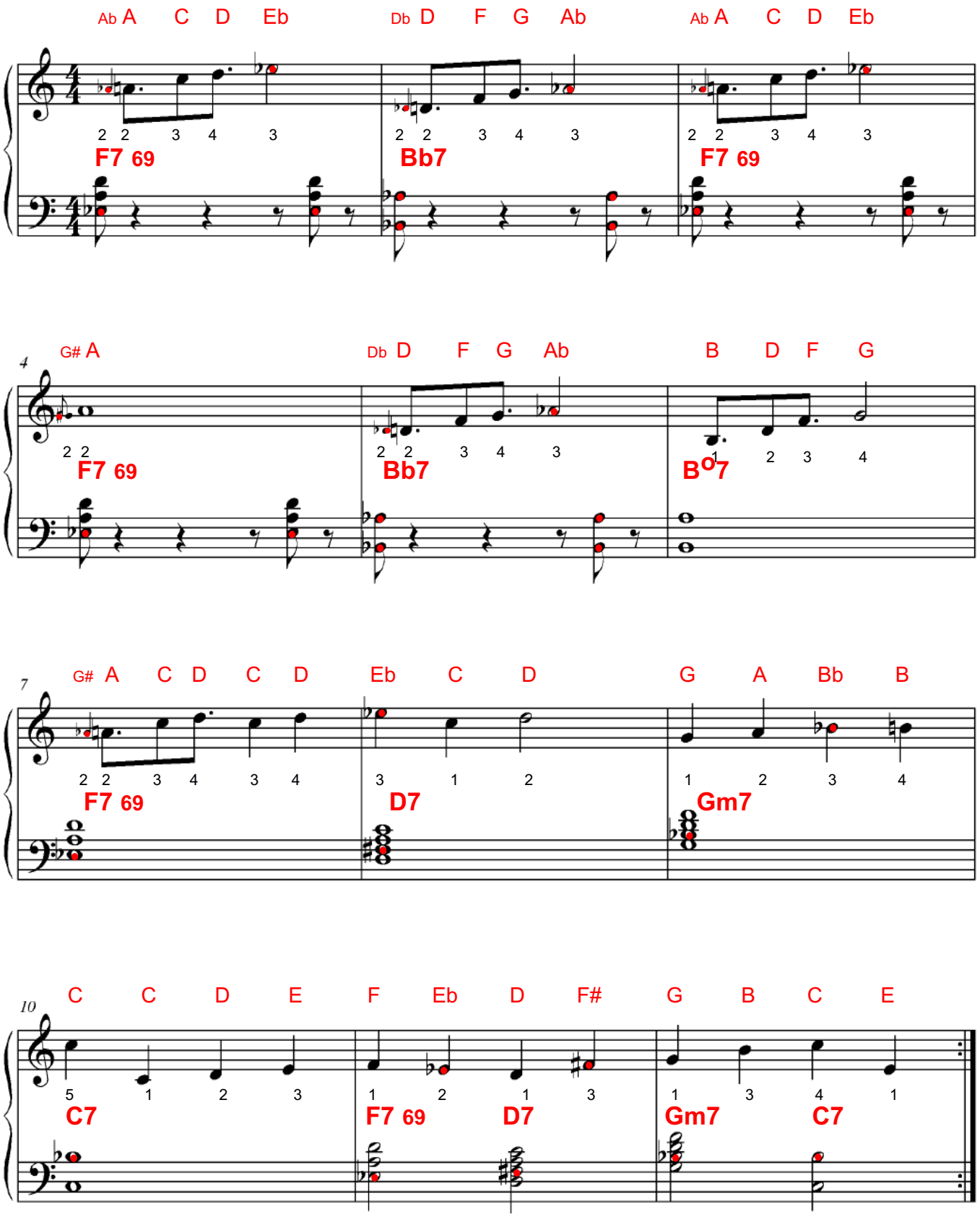
CHORDS USED



You can IMPROVISE along with this progression either using the chord tones or by using the F BLUES SCALE. Try the tune on the next page and then try adding in some of your own ideas.

F BLUES SCALE - 2 Octaves



Traditional BLUES in F

TRADITIONAL BLUES
In VARIOUS KEYS

Practice the blues progression in various keys so that you get used to the different sounds, shapes,
Try and work out your own chord shapes. Go by what sounds best to YOU.

F7	Bb7	F7	F7	Bb7	Bdim
F7	D7	Gm	C7	F7 D7	Gm7 C7

G7	C7	G7	G7	C7	C#dim
G7	E7	Am	D7	G7 E7	Am7 D7

Ab7	Db7	Ab7	Ab7	Db7	Ddim
Ab7	F7	Bbm	Eb7	Ab7 F7	Bbm Eb7

Bb7	Eb7	Bb7	Bb7	Eb7	Edim
Bb7	G7	Cm7	F7	Bb7 G7	Cm7 F7

C7	F7	C7	C7	F7	F#dim
C7	A7	Dm7	G7	C7 A7	Dm7 G7

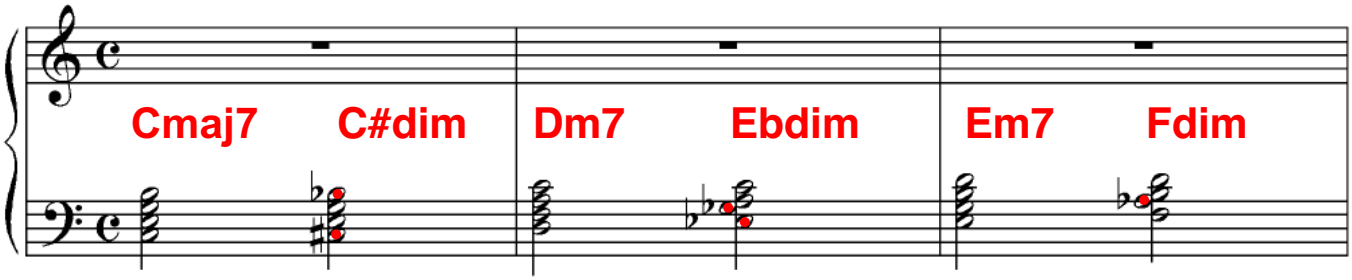
D7	G7	D7	D7	G7	G#dim
D7	B7	Em	A7	D7 B7	Em7 A7

Eb7	Ab7	Eb7	Eb7	Ab7	Adim
Eb7	C7	Fm	Bb7	Eb7 C7	Fm7 Bb7

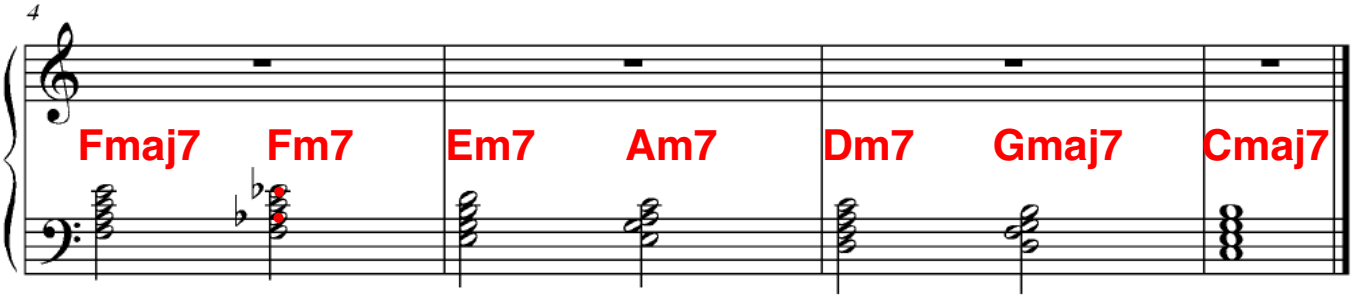
COOL PRACTICE PROGRESSIONS

BLUES / JAZZ PRACTICE PROGRESSIONS

Another often used fun progression in C

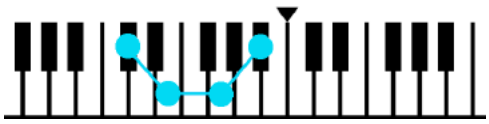


Hold each chord for 2 beats per bar



Cmaj7

C#dim



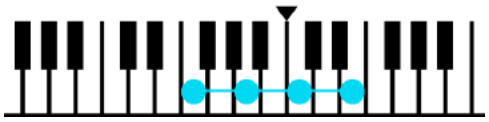
Dm7

Ebdim

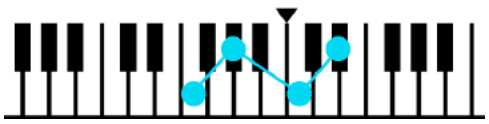
Em7

Fdim

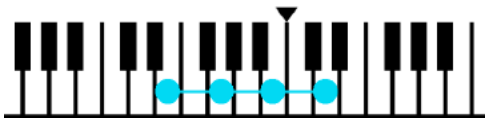
Fmaj7



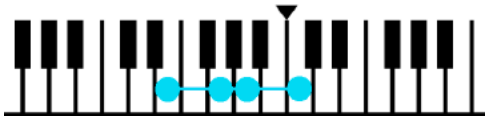
Fm7



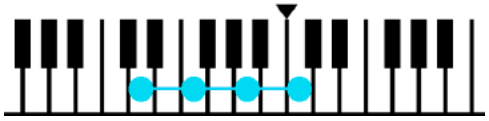
Em7



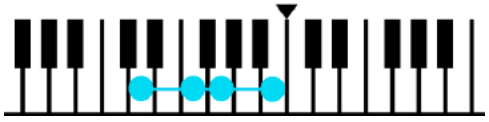
Am7
(mid)



Dm7



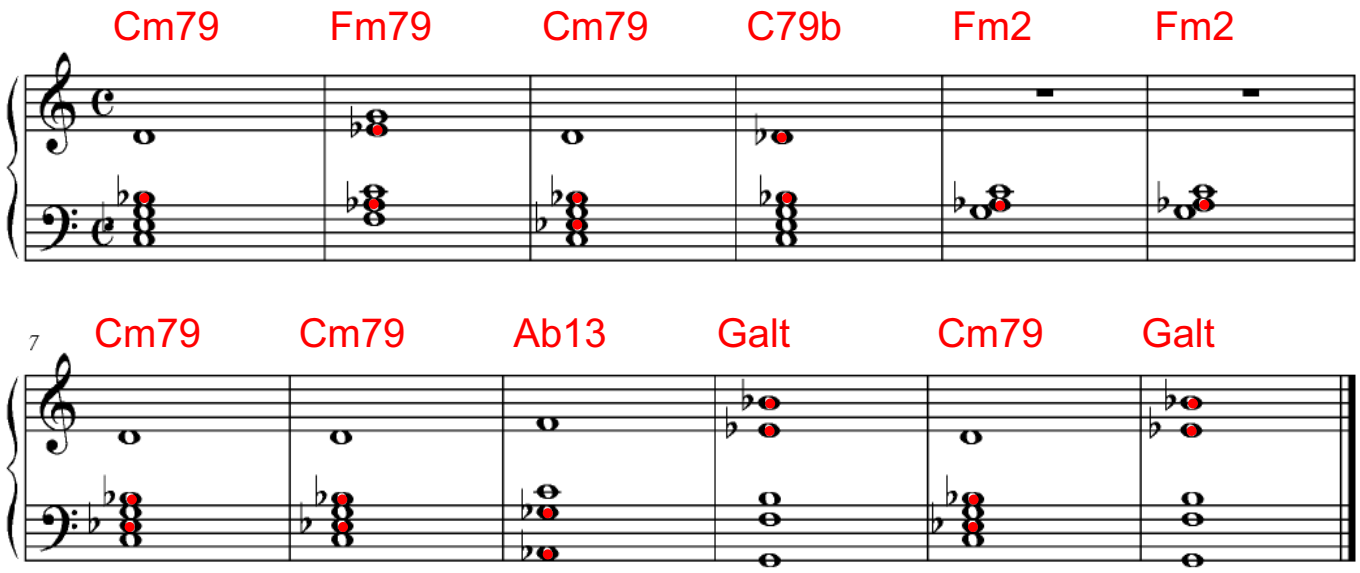
Gmaj7
(mid)

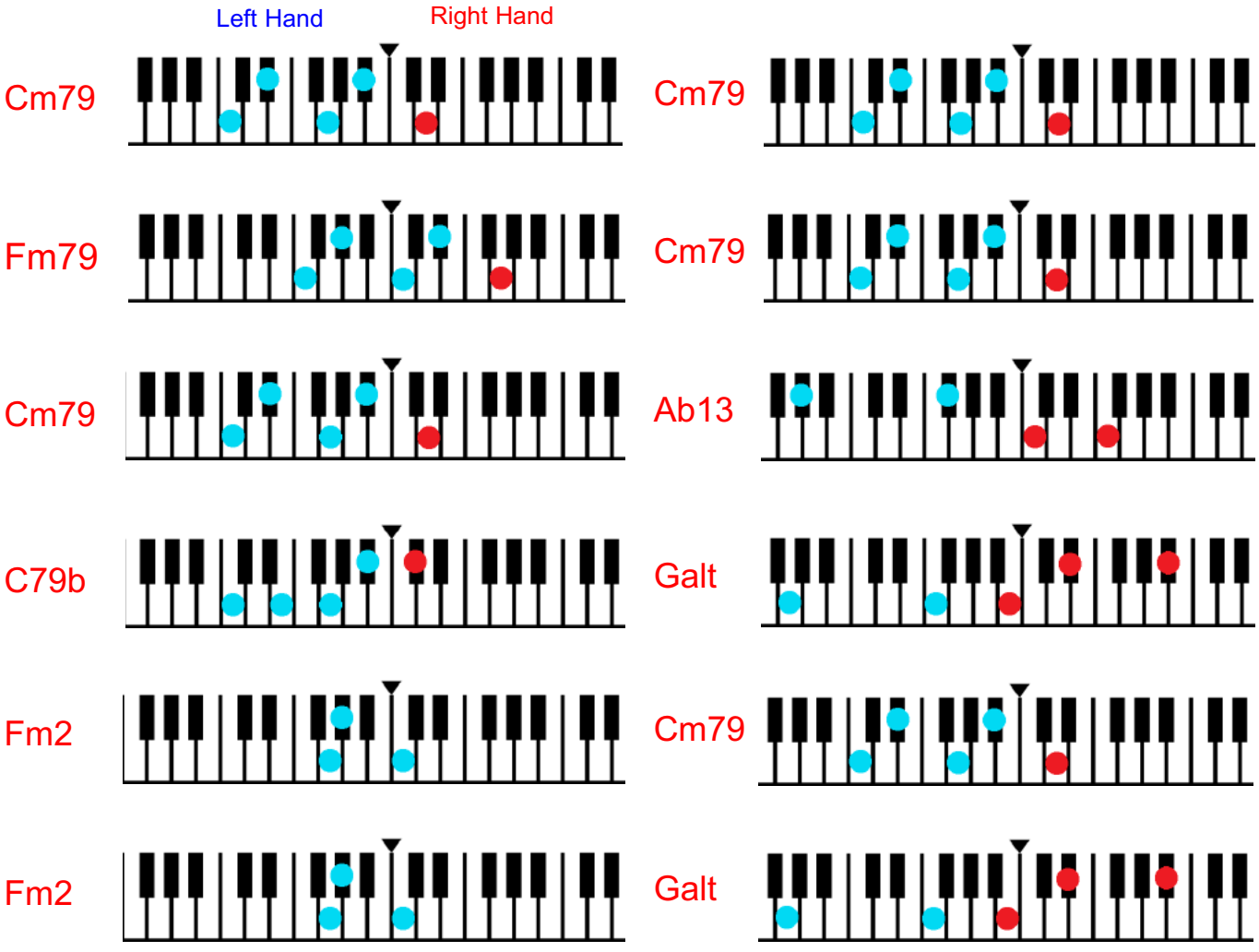


Cmaj7

BLUES / JAZZ PRACTICE PROGRESSIONS

12 Bar Blues in the key of Cm

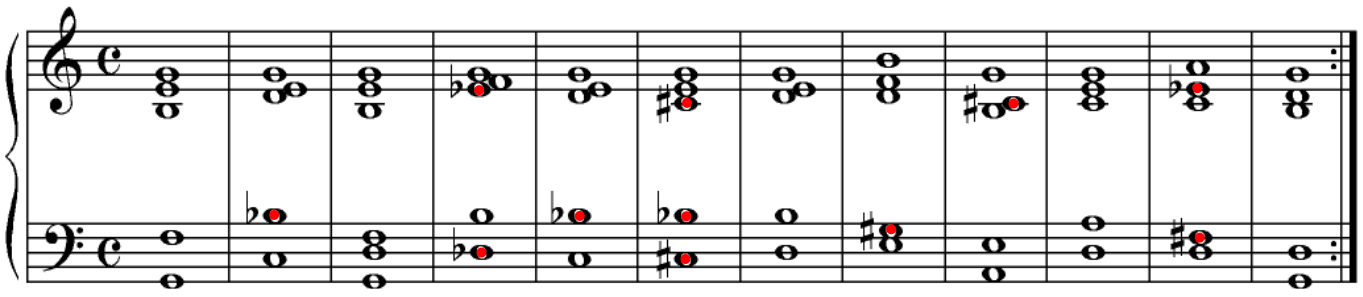




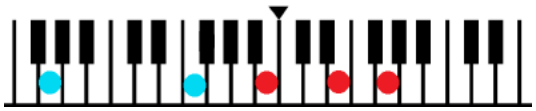
BLUES / JAZZ PRACTICE PROGRESSIONS

12 Bar Blues in the key of G

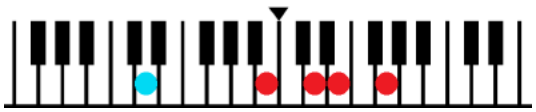
G13 C9 G13 Db9(11#) C9 C#o G6/D E9 A9 Am/D D13(9b) G



G13

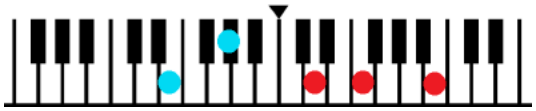


G6/D

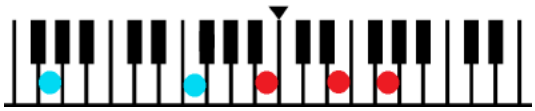


C9

E9

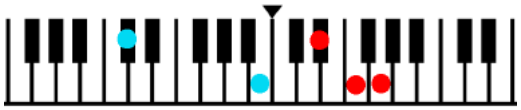


G13



A9

Db9 11#



Am/D

C9

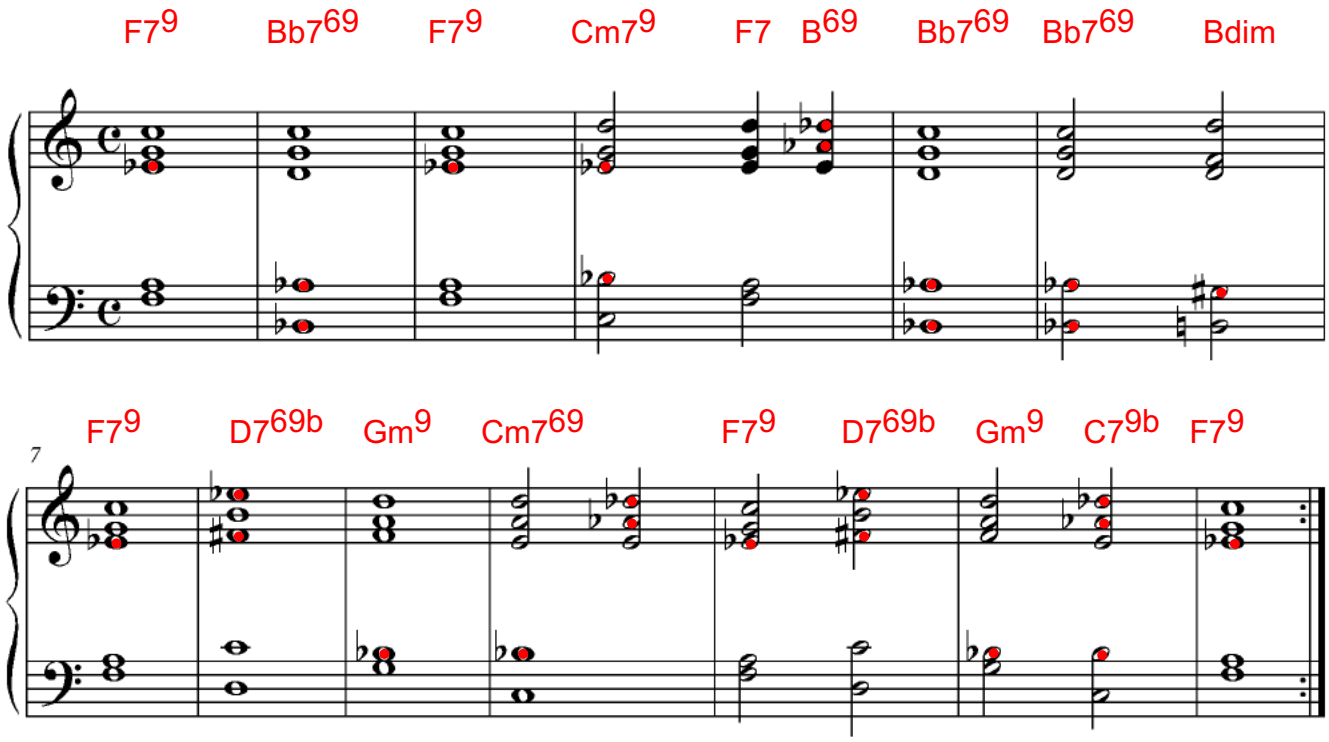
D13

C#o

G

BLUES / JAZZ PRACTICE PROGRESSIONS

12 Bar Blues in the key of F



IDEAS FOR FURTHER PRACTICE

IDEAS FOR FURTHER PRACTICE

The best way to practice all the techniques in this book is to apply them to ACTUAL classic standard songs.
Books like “The Best Chord Changes For The Most Requested Standards” give you just the melody line and chord changes so it’s up to you to work out the left hand chords.

Check out the following songs, you could download the music at www.musicdirect.com

Pennies From Heaven - Arthur Johnston - Cmaj7

Fly Me To The Moon - Bart Howard - (‘Caterpillar’) - Am7

You Make Me Feel So Young - (Sinatra) Cmaj7

Come Fly With Me - (Sinatra) Cmaj7

My Funny Valentine - G (bass run)

As Time Goes By - (Casablanca) - Dm7

Big Spender - Dm7

Georgia - (Ray Charles) - Fmaj7

The Tender Trap - (Sinatra) - F6

The Lady Is A Tramp - (Sinatra) - Cmaj7

A Sunday Kind Of Love - F6

A Nightingale Sang In Berkeley Square - Sherman - EbM7

Loverman (Oh where can you be) - Davis/Sherman - Dm7

One Day In Your Life - sung by Michael Jackson - 7th Voicings - Cmaj7

Let There Be Love - Lionel Rand - EbMaj7

BOOK 9 - SCALES & ARPEGGIOS - MAKING THE MOST OF PRACTICE
In book 9 you will find lots of way to improve your technique and knowledge of chords. You can start this practice at any time. The sooner the better!

And check out the book reviews in BOOK 10

PRACTICING SEVENTH CHORDS

It is **essential** that you know all the seventh chords inside out.

Let's look at three different methods for practice

1. Four types of sevenths built on the same root note

Basically, you start with a C MAJOR SEVEN chord
Then you flatten the seventh to make a C SEVEN chord
Then you flatten the 3rd to make a C MINOR SEVEN chord
Then you flatten the 5th to make a C HALF DIMINISHED SEVEN chord

The symbol for 'half diminished' is Ø

2. ONE seventh TYPE at a time through all 12 keys

This is where you play ALL the MAJOR SEVENTHS in all 12 keys
Then you play all the SEVEN chords in all 12 keys
Then you play all the MINOR SEVEN chords in all 12 keys
Then you play all the DIMINISHED SEVEN chords in all 12 keys

3. The II - V - I progression in all 12 keys

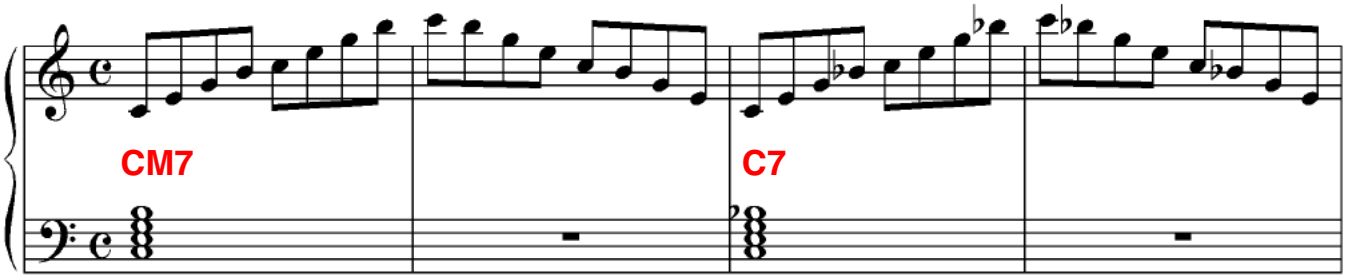
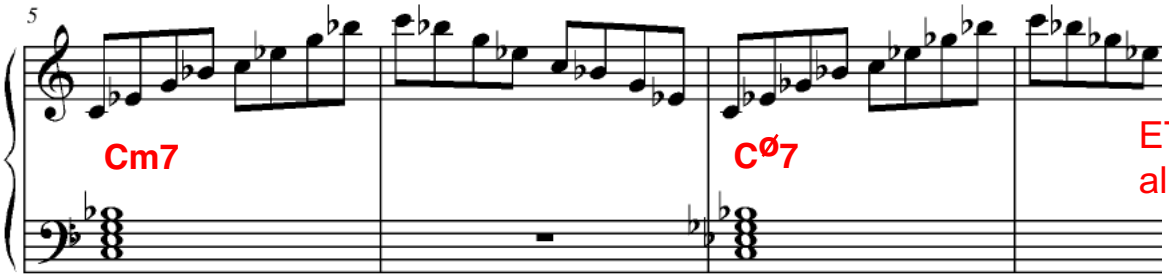
This is where you play a II - V - I progression in the key of C
Then you play the II - V - I progression in the key of Db
and so on through all 12 keys.

It is best to start with method 1 because you get to really understand how each chord is formed.

Don't make the mistake of practicing a few and then giving up. Make sure you work your way through each chord group!

PRACTICING SEVENTH CHORDS

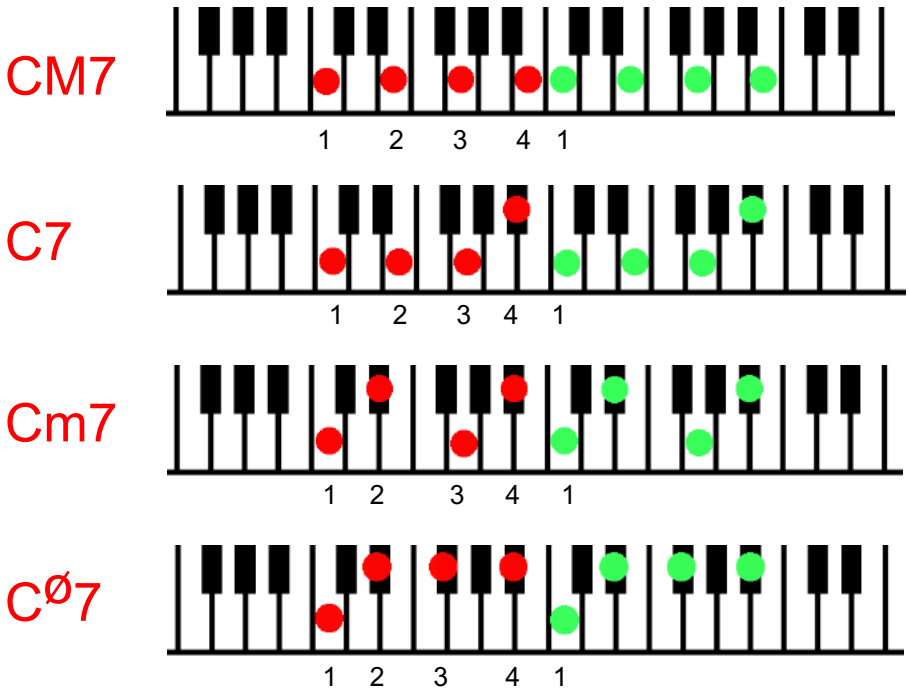
Method 1 (four types built on the same root note)



ETC through all12 keys

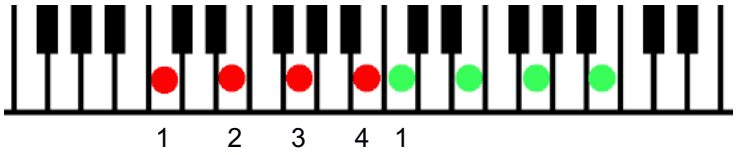
Now do the same starting on Db and work your way through all 12 keys
Use the keyboard diagrams on the following pages if you need to.

Right Hand Fingering 2 Octaves

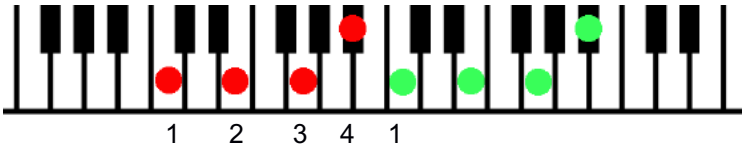


SEVENTHS
Right Hand Fingering - 2 Octaves

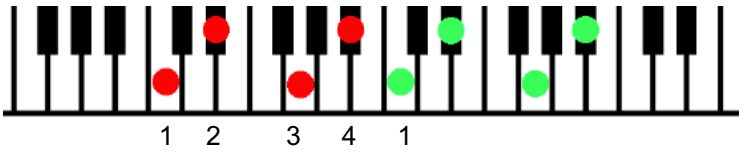
CM7



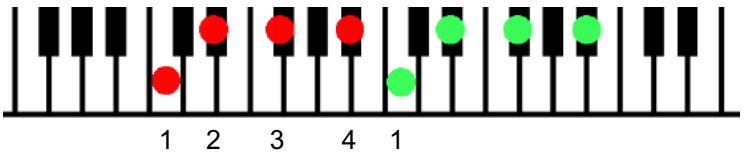
C7



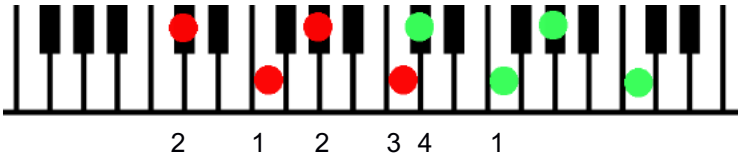
Cm7



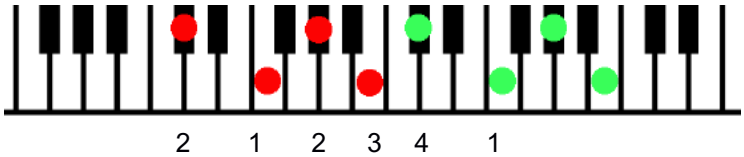
C$^{\emptyset}$7



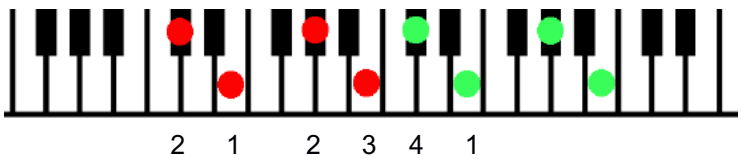
DbM7



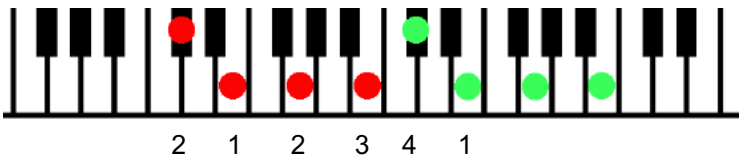
Db7



Dbm7



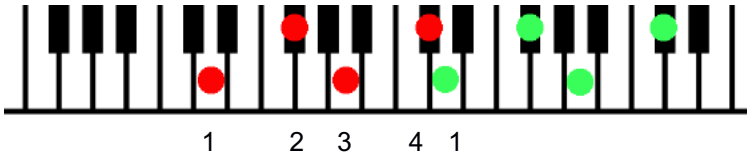
Db$^{\emptyset}$7



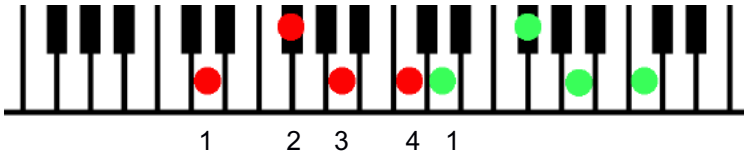
No. of times practiced

SEVENTHS
Right Hand Fingering - 2 Octaves

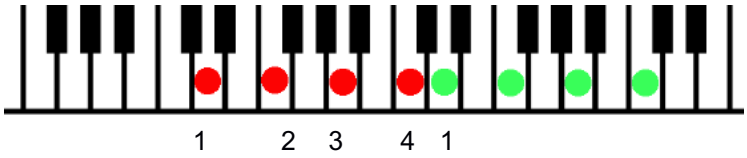
DM7



D7



Dm7



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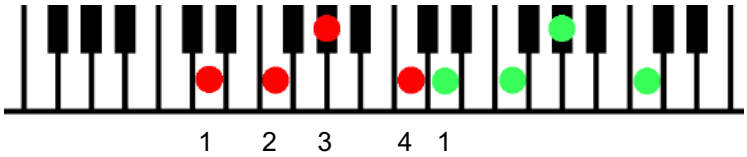
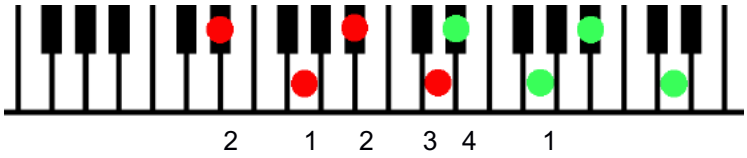
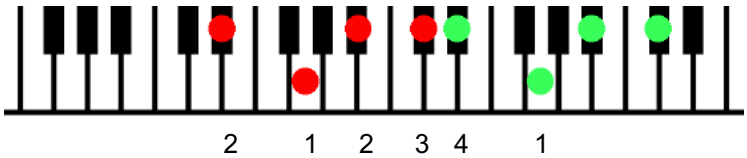


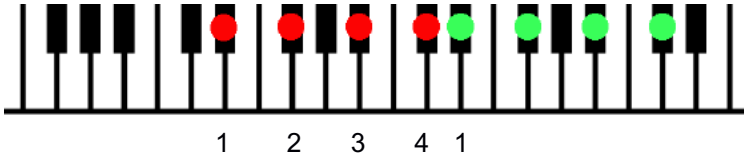
EbM7



Eb7



Ebm7



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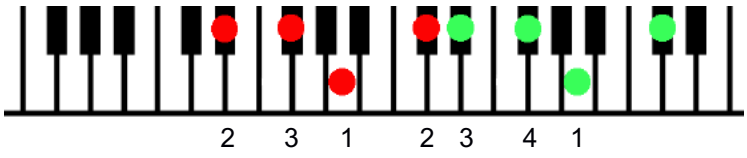
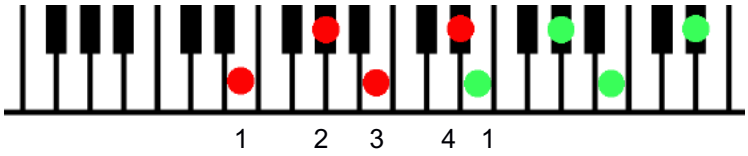


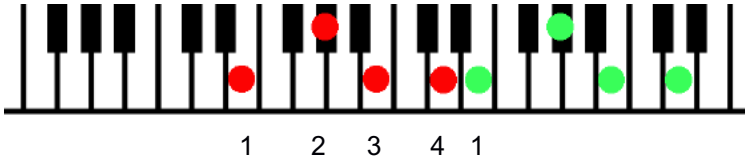
No. of times practiced

SEVENTHS
Right Hand Fingering - 2 Octaves

EM7



E7



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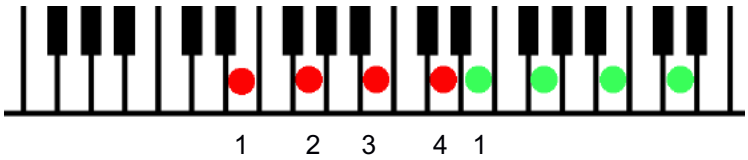

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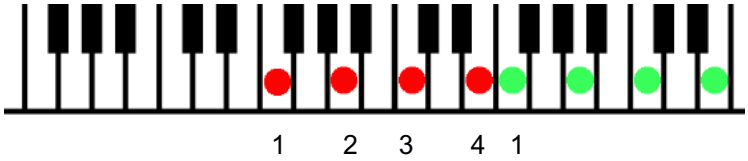
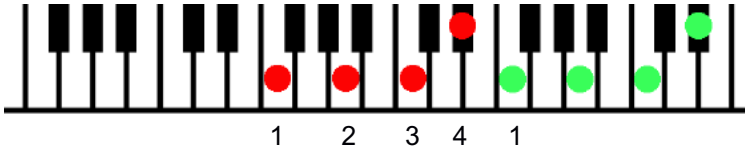
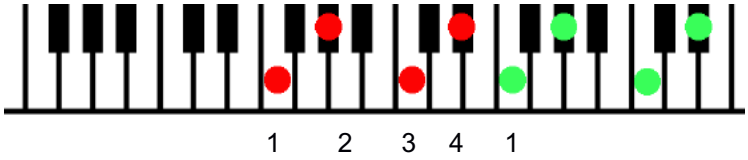
FM7



F7



Fm7



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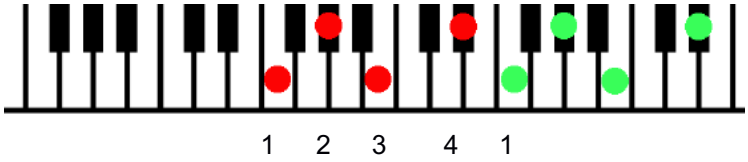
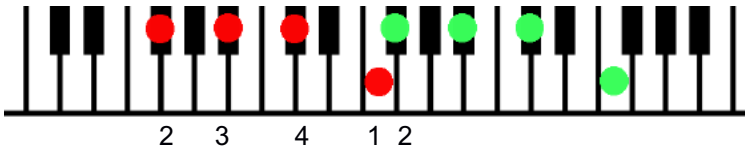


No. of times practiced

☐ ☐

SEVENTHS
Right Hand Fingering - 2 Octaves

GbM7



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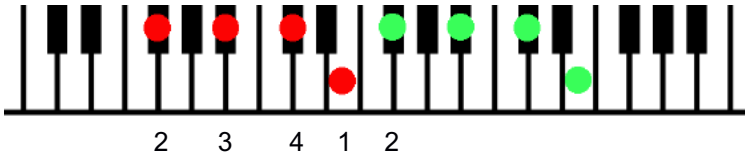
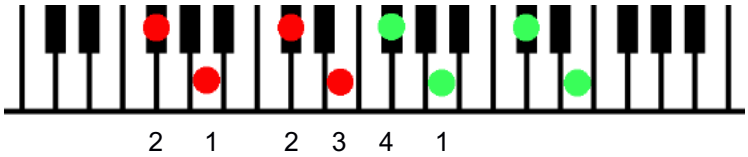
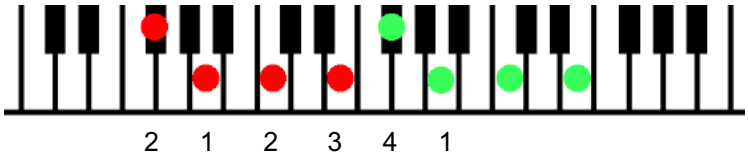


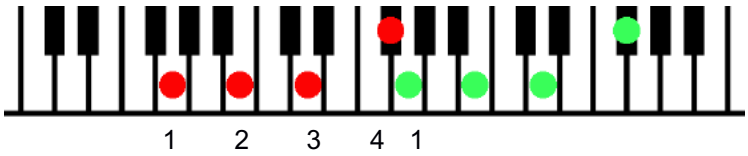
Gbm7



Gb$^{\emptyset}$7



GM7



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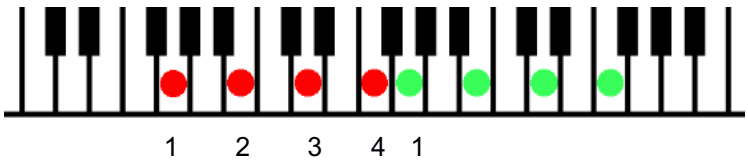

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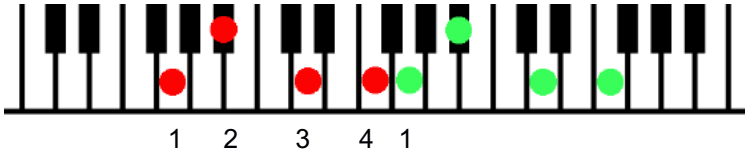

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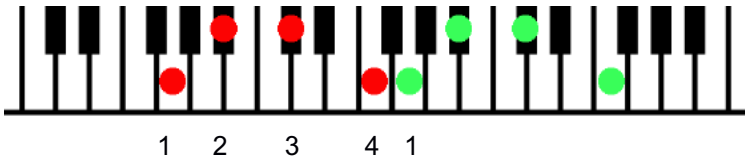
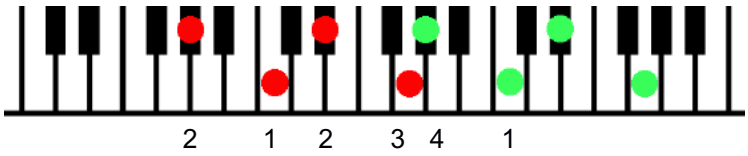


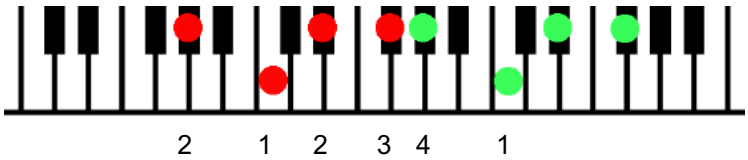
No. of times practiced

SEVENTHS
Right Hand Fingering - 2 Octaves

AbM7



Ab7



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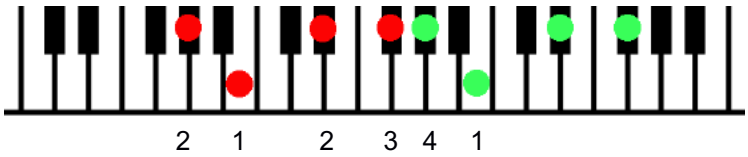
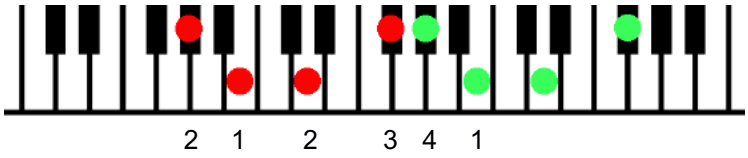
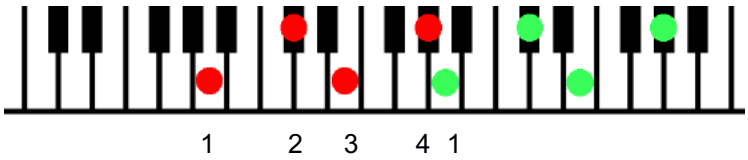


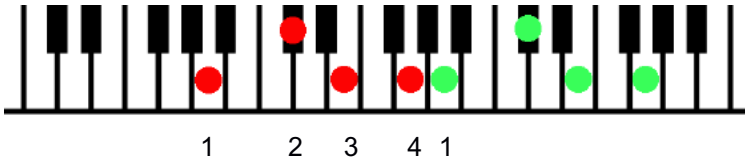
Ab$^{\emptyset}$7



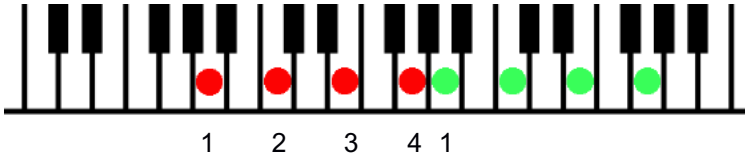
AM7



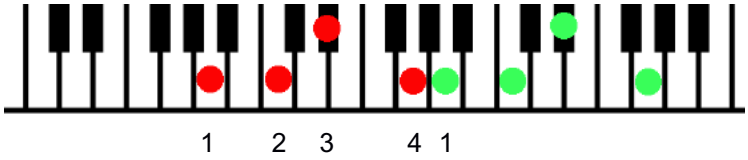
A7



Am7



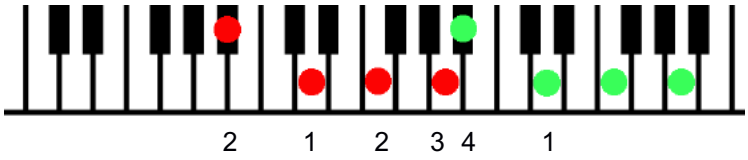
A$^{\emptyset}$7



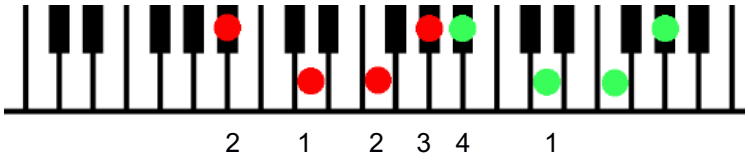
No. of times practiced

SEVENTHS
Right Hand Fingering - 2 Octaves

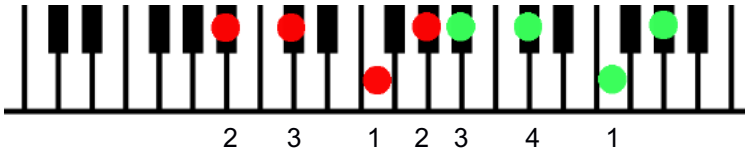
BbM7



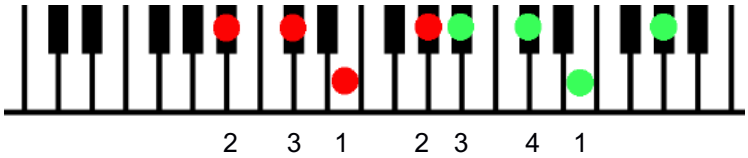
Bb7



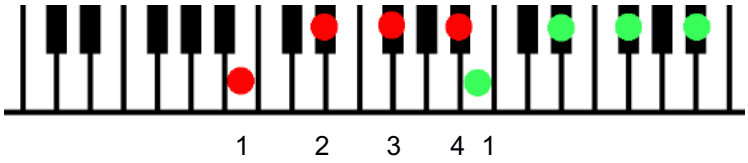
Bbm7



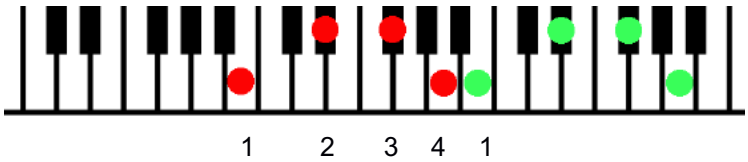
Bb^{Ø}7



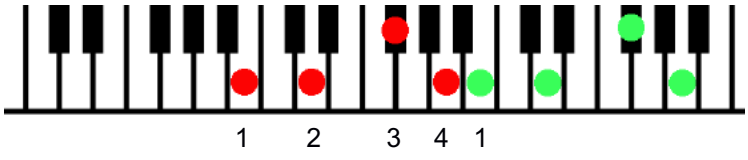
BM7



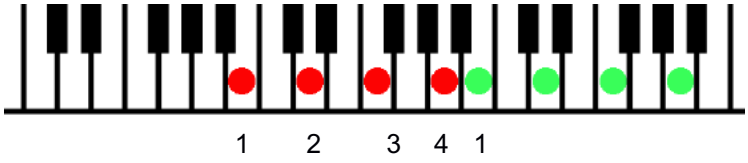
B7



Bm7



B^{Ø}7



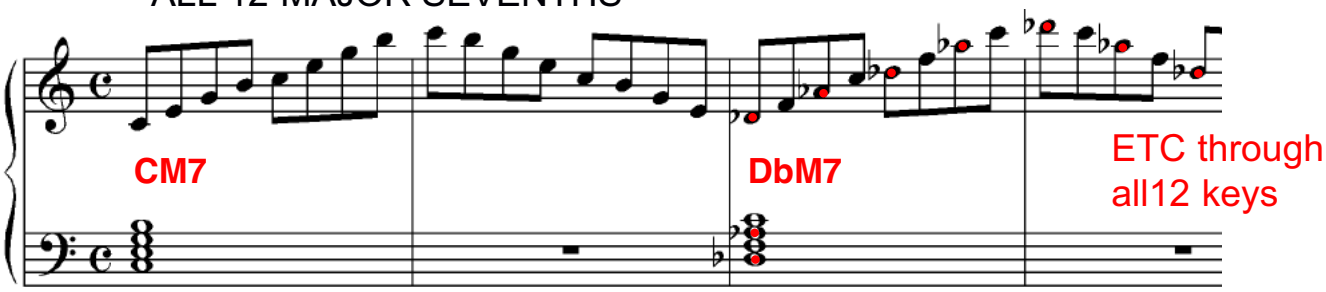
No. of times practiced

☐ ☐

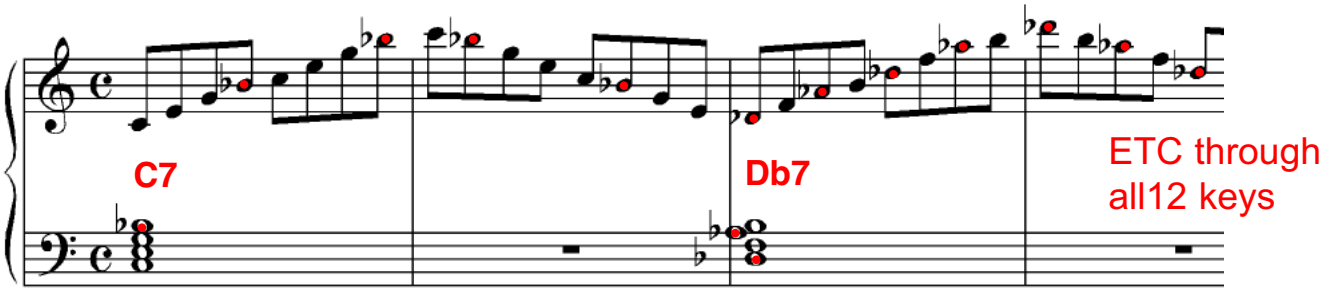
PRACTICING SEVENTH CHORDS

Method 2 (one type of seventh at a time)

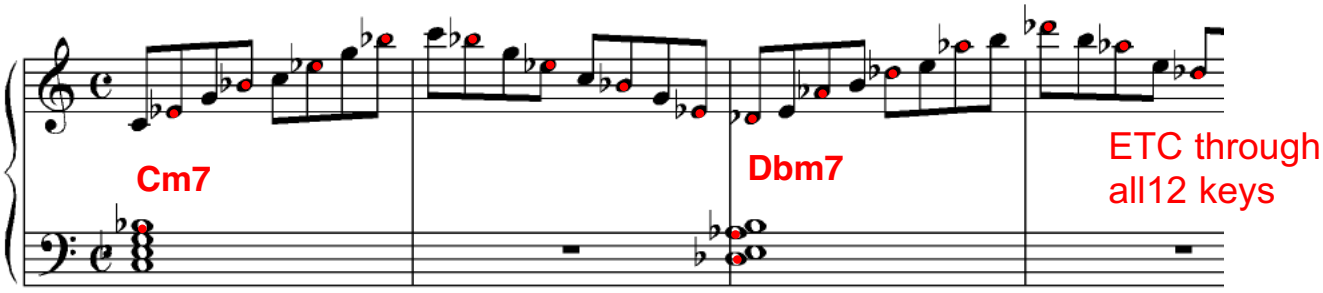
ALL 12 MAJOR SEVENTHS



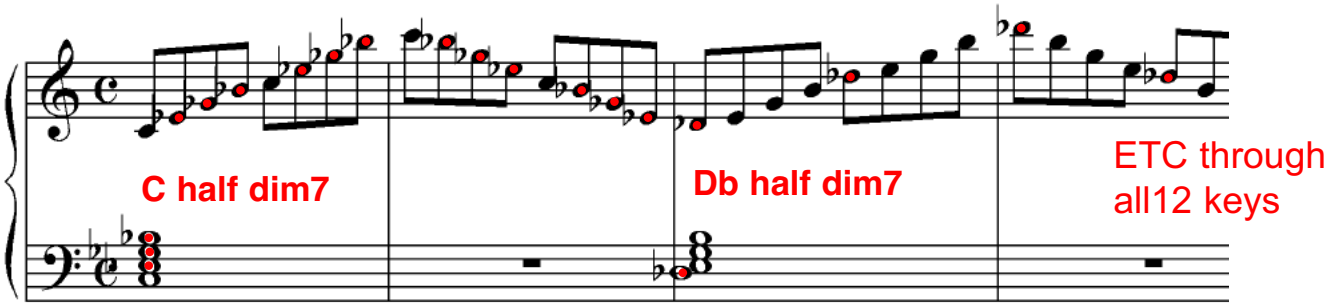
ALL 12 SEVENTHS



ALL 12 MINOR SEVENTHS



ALL 12 HALF DIMINISHED SEVENTHS



No. of times practiced

MAJOR 7's SEVENTHS MINOR 7's HALF DIMINISHED 7's

PRACTICING SEVENTH CHORDS

Method 3 (II - V - I progression in all keys)

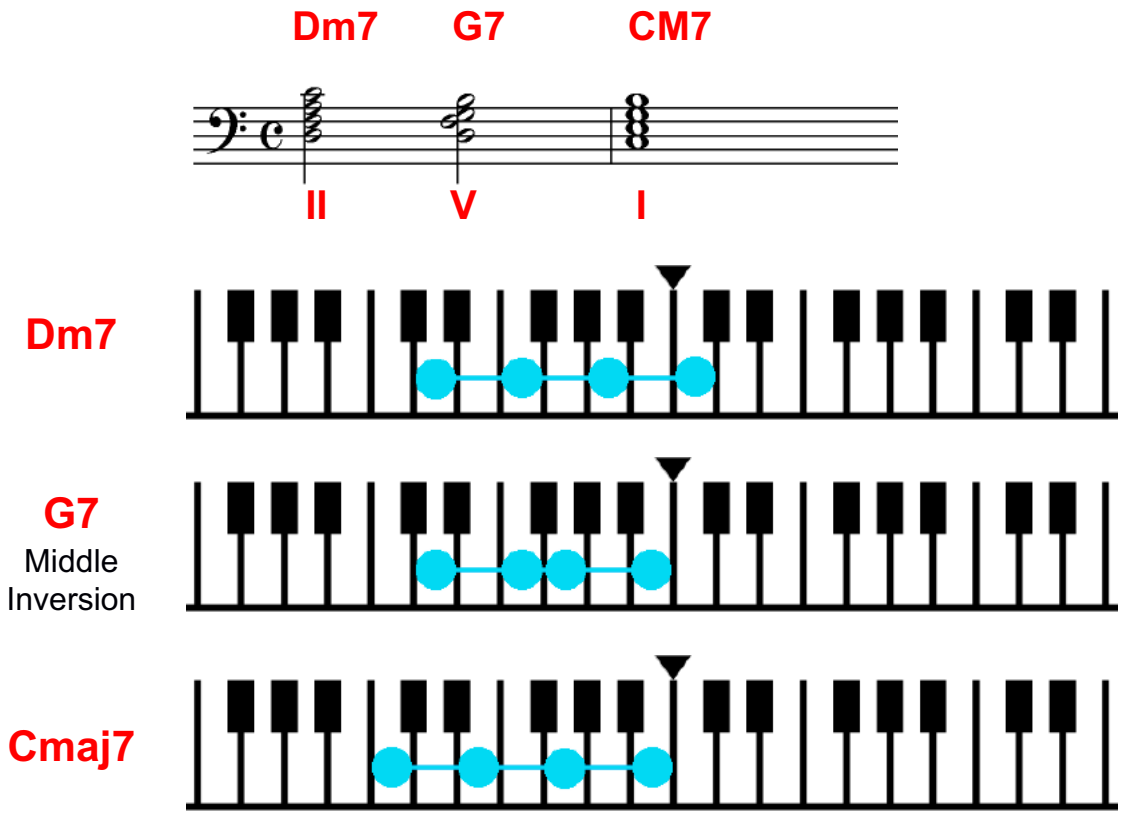
Another great way to really get to know your seventh chords is to practise the II - V - I progression in all keys.

The II - V - I (two - five - one) progression is one of the most common occurrances in music so you will be playing it a lot. Another reason it is so useful is that it uses THREE different types of sevenths - minor seven - (dominant) seven and major seven all in the one short progression.

Try the progression in the key of C. Think about the C FAMILY chords

CM7	Dm7	Em7	FM7	G7	Am7	B half dim7
I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII

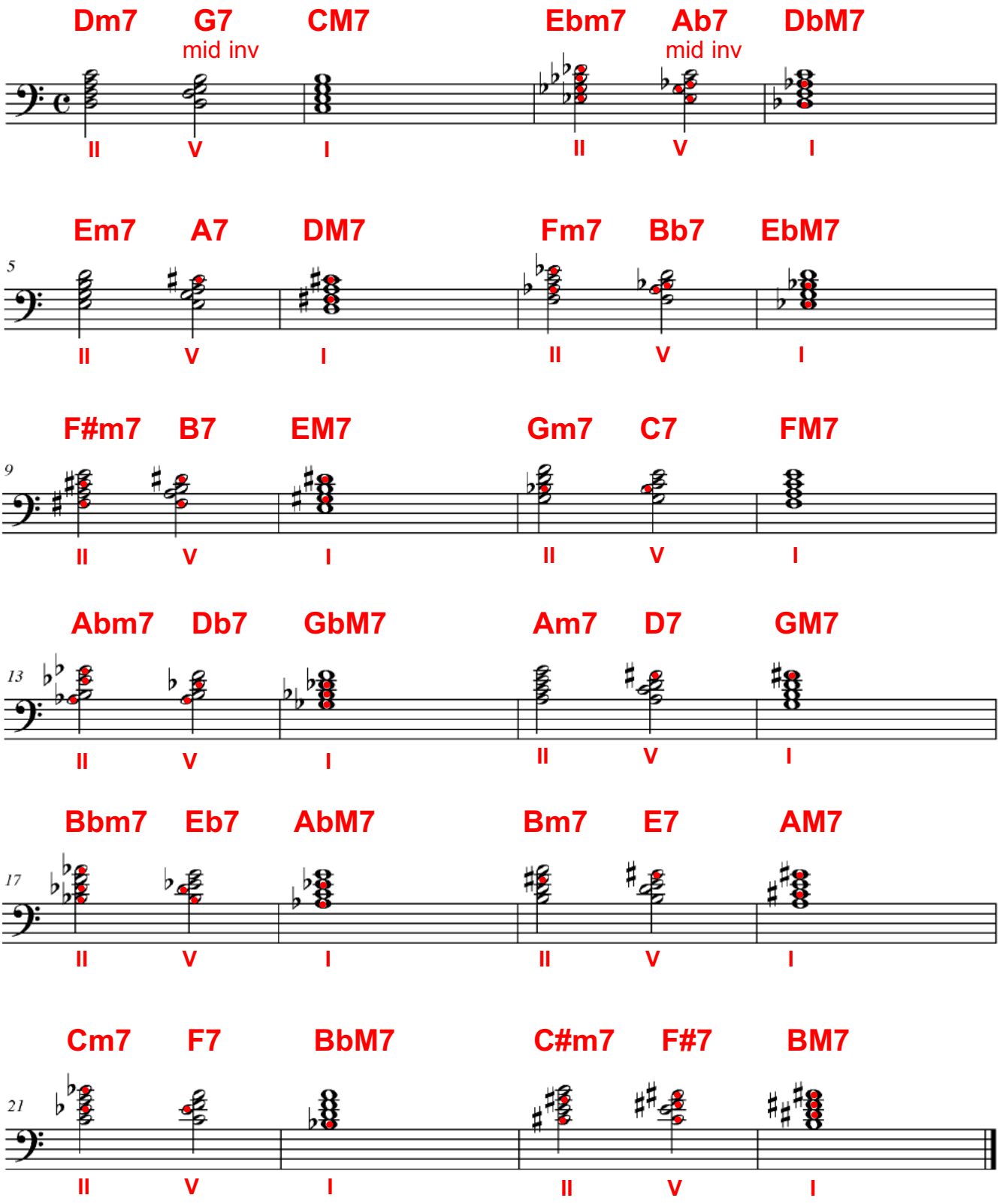
Find the II - V - I chords - Dm7 - G7 - CM7 then play them in the following way



Now practice the progression on the following page in all 12 keys.
Later you may want to try different inversions.

PRACTICING SEVENTH CHORDS

Method 3 (II - V - I progression in all keys)



No. of times practiced

☐ ☐

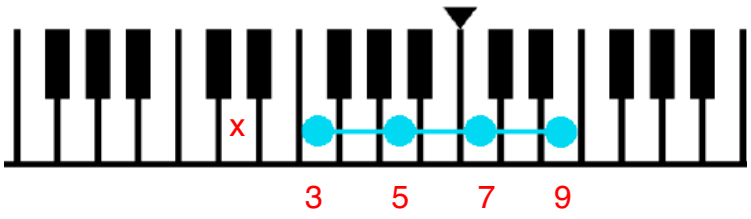
PRACTICING SEVENTH CHORDS

Method 3 (II - V - I progression in all keys)

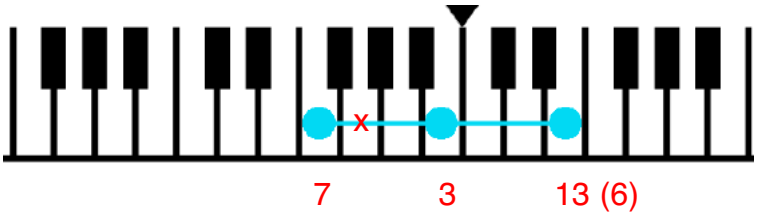
If you are feeling very brave, you could also practise the previous exercise using the QUARTAL VOICINGS (see page 47)

Play the following II - V - I progression in the key of C and then work out the progression for the key of Db and so on through all 12 keys.
Use the previous page as a guide.

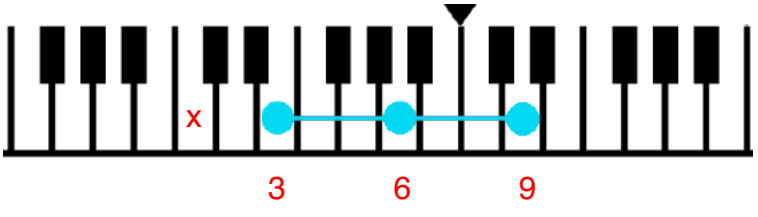
Dm79



G13



C69



YOU CAN NOW
TRY SECTION 7